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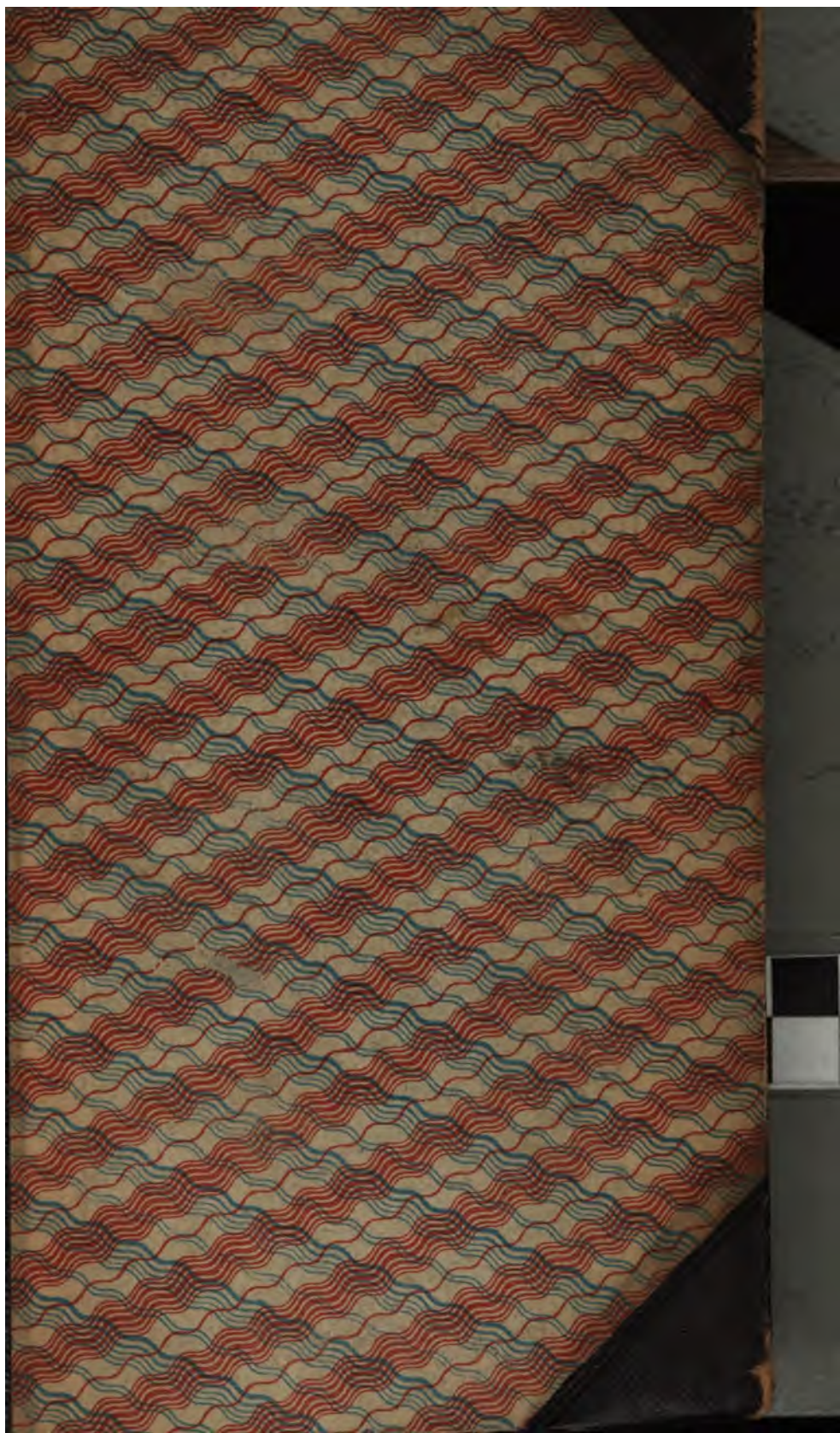
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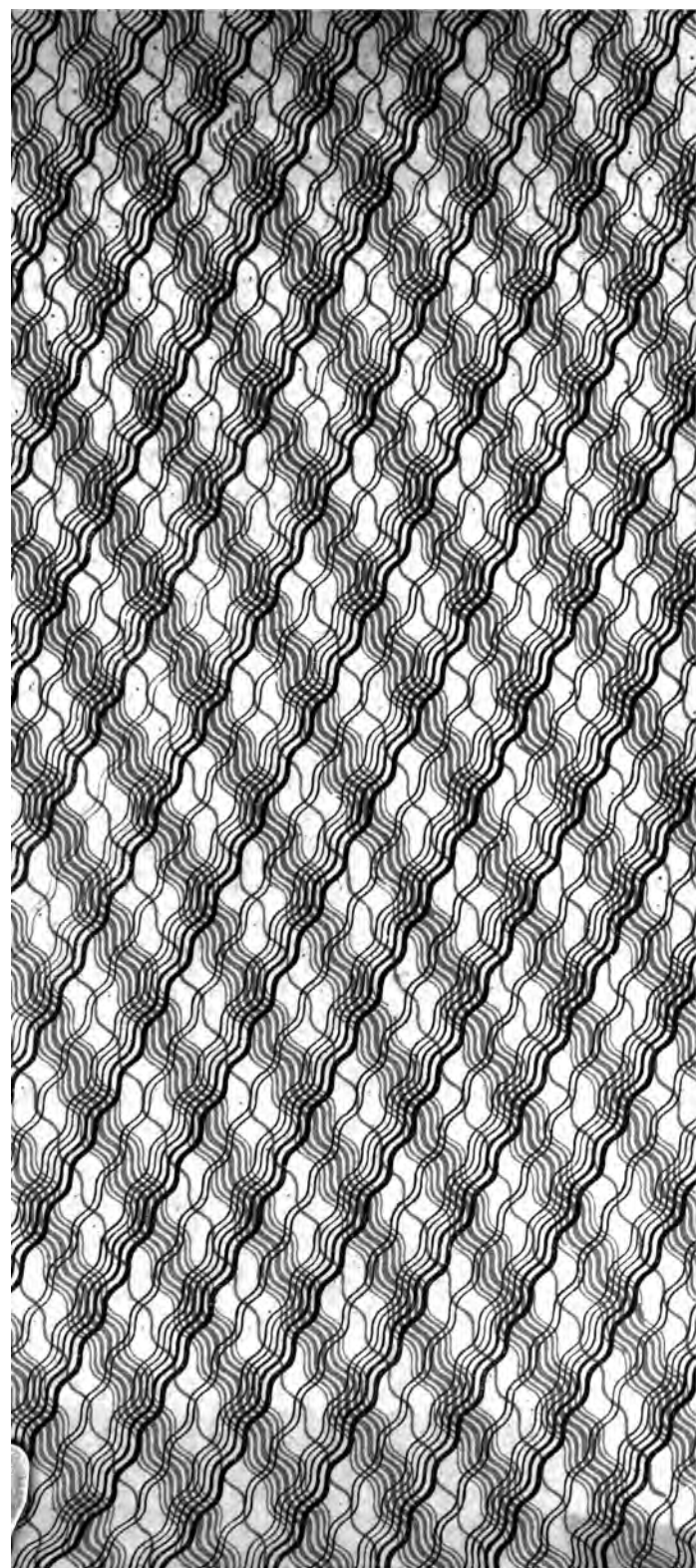
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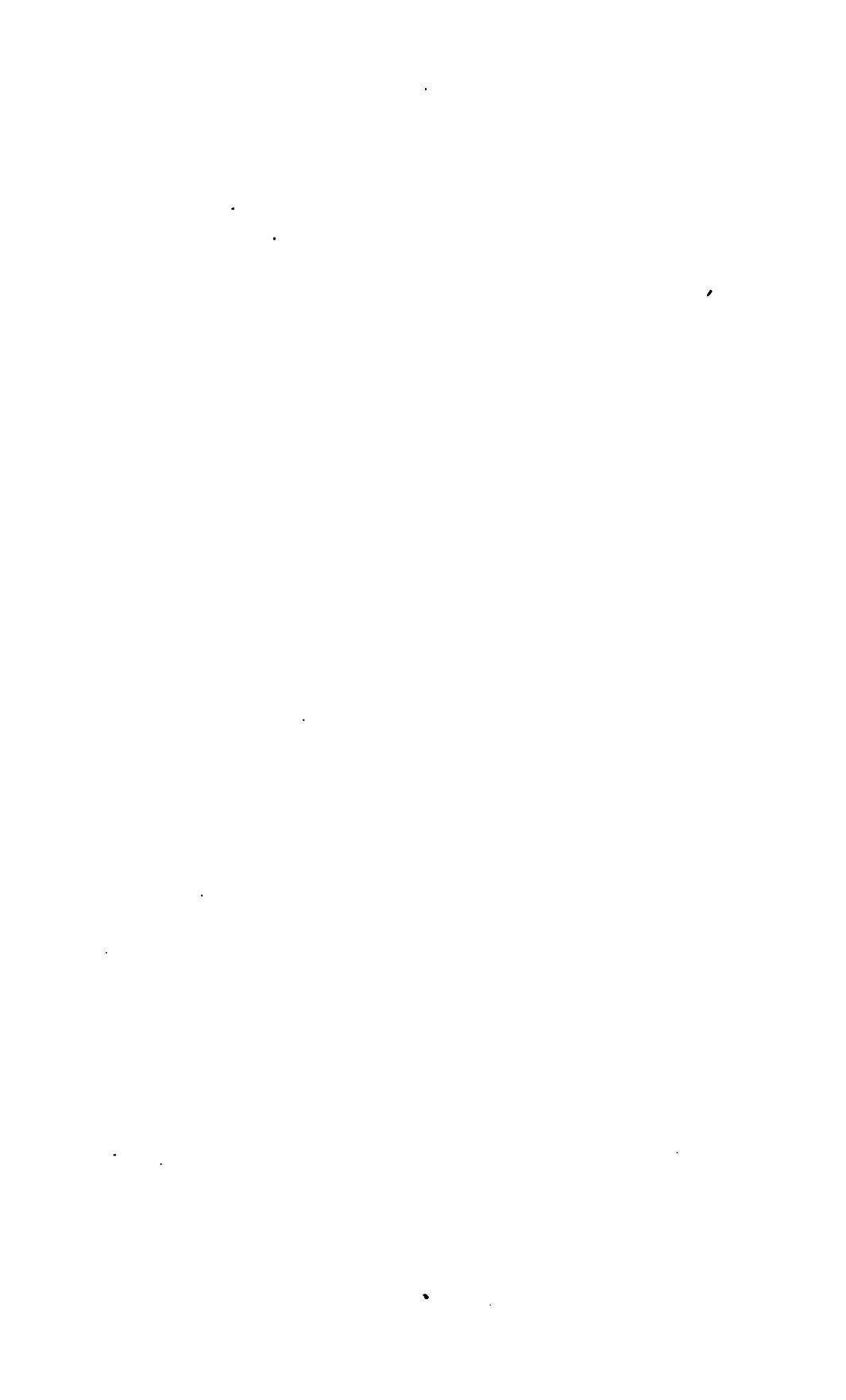
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# HORÆ BRITANNICÆ;

OR,

STUDIES

IN

ANCIENT BRITISH HISTORY,

CONTAINING

VARIOUS DISQUISITIONS

ON THE

*NATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS ANTIQUITIES,*

OF

**Great Britain.**

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By JOHN HUGHES.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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## PREFACE.

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**THE** investigation of Ancient History is not only a pleasing amusement, but, if properly directed, becomes an important and dignified study. Man desires to know what has been transacted in the world in past ages, while he looks forward with trembling hope to futurity. It is interesting to look back to the infant state of great nations, and particularly to inquire what connection subsisted between our own ancestors and the names that are recorded in ancient story. But how little do we know of the primary periods of history? "Whence is the stream of years? Whither do they roll along? Where have they hid in mist their many coloured sides? I look into the times of old," said the Bard of Selma; "but they seem dim to Ossian's eyes, like reflected moonbeams on a distant lake."

He that endeavours to collect the scattered fragments of the early annals of our forefathers, must not expect to meet with any general plaudits; it is too great a stretch of intellect for the generality

of those who have been reared within the bosom of civilized society to conceive of a state of things altogether different from that in which they live : to others, it is too great an effort of humility to stoop to converse with their rude ancestors, and to hear the tale of other years. But, as great characters may take a pleasure in retracing the scenes of their childhood, and, in fond memory, living them o'er again ; there are minds so constructed as to welcome him who traces the stream of years, and sheds an illuminating ray over the mists that obscure the annals of the *olden days*. To see ancient empires crumbling in the dust, and their pomp and splendour, (after the lapse of centuries,) revived in nations once treated as barbarians, and rising on the ruins of their conquerors ; such a review of things cannot fail being interesting to the contemplative mind. " Come with that which kindles the past ; rear the forms of old on their dark-brown years,"

A fondness for the history of past ages marked the early years of the Author of these papers, although his opportunities of gratifying his inclination were exceedingly scanty. While roaming among the—

" Rude, romantic, shades and woods,  
Hanging walks, and falling floods,"

Of his native spot, he cherished a strong propen-

sity for antiquarian studies: but pursuits of a more serious nature obliged him to relinquish what would have proved so pleasing. Years elapsed, when he conceived a strong desire to pay some attention to inquiries respecting the ancient history of Britain: but he soon found that circumstances would not permit him to have access to the treasures of ancient lore, without incurring an expense to which his means were inadequate; as well as engaging his leisure moments to an extent incompatible with important duties.

When the first draught of the present Work was sketched out, the design was merely to afford a summary view of the history of religion, among the ancient inhabitants of Great Britain: but, as this could not be done with satisfaction, without connecting that inquiry with the more general history of the British nations, something of that kind was drawn up by way of introduction, which was afterwards considerably enlarged.

The Work, as it now stands, is divided into three departments; and each of these may, in some respects, be considered separate, although, the whole being taken together, each part seems necessary to form a complete view of our national antiquities. Thus, in pursuing the history of the British churches, under the Roman government, it is desirable to be acquainted with the relative

situation of the different tribes ; their ancient superstitions ; their laws, customs, and language ; their particular genius as a people ; and their moral character, previous to their coming under the Roman yoke. Further than this, an inquiry has been instituted as to the remote origin of the primordial Britons, and the period of the first population of the Queen of Isles.

To give such an enlarged illustration of our ancient history, within a moderate compass, was found to be no easy task ; and the Author grew apprehensive that he had undertaken what would prove too heavy a weight for him. To accomplish his design required much leisure, many expensive books, considerable application, together with judgment and discrimination. But the person who now presents the public with a summary of ANCIENT BRITISH HISTORY, does not profess himself to be possessed of all the leisure, or all the ability, which a Work like the present may require ; he has, therefore, availed himself of the assistance of respectable recent authorities, where he was unable to have access to originals, or afraid of dependence on his own judgment. But, it is hoped, this Work will not be found altogether destitute of originality ; nor the Author be set down for a mere plodding compiler.

In the present undertaking it is attempted



to weigh opposing systems with an unprejudiced mind. While some men of learning are disposed to confine all knowledge of our ancient history to foreign authorities, others pay unlimited deference to our own national traditions and national documents. When both coincide, we have the completest evidence that can be expected: but, where we have but the one, we may, in certain instances, deem it conclusive; while, in other cases, room is left for hesitation. It has been the Author's endeavour to judge with impartiality, and to decide according to the weight of evidence.

The recent labours of several ingenious antiquaries have tended to shed that lustre on the topics investigated in these papers, whereby the Author's plan has been greatly facilitated. He owes great respect to the names of Whitaker, Owen, Maurice, Faber, Roberts, and Davies; all but the first of whom are living. In the second volume, he shall have to acknowledge his obligations to Mr. Sharon Turner, the author of the *Anglo-Saxon History*; while it is with great pleasure he has to mention the researches of the learned Bishop of St. David's, the Right Reverend Dr. Burgess. In such illustrious company he was encouraged to pursue his way through the gloom of British History. The mention of names so highly respected is here made, not out of ostentation, but by way of humble acknowledgment; as,

without such assistance, the present attempt would not have been entered upon.

In order that the work might form a proper compendium of ancient British History, the whole plan has been so far enlarged beyond the original design, that it will now contain a summary view of our national transactions from the earliest dawn of intelligence, or even of rational conjecture, to the final establishment of the Saxons in this Island.

The extension of the plan has occasioned the forming of the work into two volumes.

As in the first volume, the History of the Britons previous to Christianity, and the Druidical rites and superstitions are treated of ; so the second will comprise the History of the Roman-British period, and of the Christian religion among our ancestors. The religious and national history of that period will be investigated, according to the best light we have to direct our researches. The controversy occasioned by our countryman Pelagius and his adherents will be particularly attended to ; and certain ancient British documents, not known to the learned in general, will enable us to throw a light upon the state of the church of Britain. The fierce conflicts between the native Britons and the Saxons, the Mission

of Augustine from Rome, the History of Columba, and the labours of the Culdees among the Northumbrians, will form the concluding topics of the second volume.

The Author offers his performance to the Public with all proper deference to the judgment of the learned, being conscious that, with superior advantages, it might have been rendered more worthy of patronage; but, such as it is, he hopes the critics will not treat it with undue severity, by harshly censuring its real, or supposed defects.

In a work at one time pursued with avidity, then thrown aside, and afterwards resumed repeatedly; if the Reader find some repetitions and incoherences, the exercise of his candour is requested. If also the same topic adverted to, in different parts of the work, be found to wear a various aspect, being held out not exactly in the same point of view; this would naturally arise from following the impression made on the mind at the time, not exactly according with what appeared so plausible on a former occasion. Being wedded to no hypothesis but the maintenance of truth, wherever it appeared, either with a faint glimmering or a stronger lustre; if some variation of sentiment be discernible, the Author has to say, that he would be less grieved for a detection of any thing of that nature, than

being liable to the charge of loving his nation, or a pre-conceived hypothesis, more than truth.

It cannot be said here by way of apology, that the present is a hasty performance, and that excuse should be made for one who writes and publishes under such circumstances. This would be only to insult the Reader, and to provoke the Public to slight an author, who thought it not worth his while to exert himself to merit their good opinion. On the contrary, the Author of *Horæ Britannicæ*, has paid attention not only to the materials of his work, but to the arrangement of his plan, and the structure of the language. True critics will excuse some defects in the last particular, in a work in which elegance of stile could not be the principal object; for, in order to be prepared for the present undertaking, it was requisite to be conversant with some works, less famed for their elegance than the knowledge they convey of the subjects upon which they treat. In Usher and Stillingfleet, we look for truth and profound research, rather than sprightliness of expression: in Maurice and Whitaker we meet with both. But it would be presumptuous to set up as a competitor for the elegance of the last named gentleman, any more than to lay claim to the learning of the two great prelates, whose names rank so high among our ecclesiastical antiquaries. These papers are the production of one who wishes



to pay all respect to those great men who have laboured in the antiquarian department of literature; and he hopes that his work will not be denied some claim to merit, although not in the highest class.

As to the opinion which some worthy and respectable persons may have formed respecting *Studies in Ancient British History*, especially in a person who has one of the most important occupations to attend; the Author requests them not to be too hasty in their judgment, and at least to excuse a man, who might plead the example of gentlemen, who were the ornaments of literature in their day, to say nothing of eminent characters now living. It was not without being conscious of the sentiments of some worthy people, that he entered upon these studies; and, from deference to such sentiments, he often felt inclined to desist: but to relinquish his design would have been thought puerile, and some of his acquaintance urged him to proceed. He shall not be sorry to have terminated his career, and return to a more entire pursuit of studies, more immediately suited to his situation: but still, it will be difficult to obviate the objections of those, who, having themselves little taste for historical researches, will hardly admit of the utility of any investigations into ancient history. From such, the benefit of toleration is implored.

The Reader is here referred to a passage in

Richard of Cirencester, where, after the good monk had given a cursory account of the various parts of ancient Britain, he makes an apology for not pursuing his researches to a greater extent. "The negligence and inattention of our ancestors," he remarks, "in omitting to collect and preserve such documents as might have been serviceable in this particular, are not deserving of heavy censure; for scarcely any but persons in holy orders employed themselves in writing books, and such esteemed it inconsistent with their sacred office to engage in such profane labours." "But," the Monk proceeds to observe, "I rather think I may, without danger, and without offence, transmit to posterity that information, which I have drawn from a careful examination, and accurate scrutiny of ancient records, concerning the state of this kingdom in former periods." The good Abbot, he tells us, had nearly inspired him with other sentiments, by thus seeming to address him:—"Are you ignorant how short a period of time is allotted to us in this world; that the greatest exertions cannot exempt us from the appellation of unprofitable servants; and that all our studies should be directed to the purpose of being useful to others? Of what service are these things but to delude the world with unmeaning trifles?" To these remarks he replied with propriety;—"Is then every honest gratification forbidden? Do not such accounts exhibit evident proofs of a Divine Providence? Does it not hence

appear, that the proclamation of the Gospel concerning the death and merits of Christ, enlightened and subdued a world over-run with heathen superstitions? To the reply that such things are more suitably treated of in systems of chronology, I rejoin; Nor is it inexpedient to know, that our ancestors were not Autochtones, or sprung from the ground; but that God opened the book of nature to display His Omnipotence, such as it is described in the writings of Moses." The Abbot then told him, that works which were intended merely to acquire reputation for their Authors from posterity, should be committed to the flames; and then the pious Monk informs us, he repented of his undertaking, hastily concluding his work with a short chronology, desiring the reader to pray for him that he might obtain forgiveness for his offences.

The extract which is here given from the ingenious Richard, is left with the Reader, who is at liberty to apply it in the manner which he may deem most appropriate. The Author hopes, that while he is sensible of the value of time, and the shortness of human of life, he may yet be allowed to say, "that leisure hours may be dedicated to the study of the antiquities of our country, without any derogation from the sacred character."

The origin of great nations is illustrative of a Divine Providence in the government of the world;

and confirms the scriptural account, that God made of one blood all the nations of the world. When we take a survey of the heathen superstitions of our ancestors, we see the absurdity of polytheism, and the impurity which was so intimately blended with all the systems of idolatry, which in all nations had the same tendency. The history of British Christianity will shew, how tardily the night of error, the shades of darkness, retired before the light of Christian truth ; and we ought to rejoice, that we now so amply and so happily possess the blessings of civilization, and of true religion.

As to what ability is discoverable, in the prosecution of the several subjects treated of in this work, there will exist, in all probability, a difference of opinion, just as the Reader happens to be suited in his prevailing taste. Some will think that certain subjects, which they may deem curious and interesting, are too slightly handled, while they are not pleased with the dwelling so long on subjects not generally interesting. But let the main design be considered ; and candour will not pronounce the work deficient, in what it professes to treat of, as far as access could be had to materials, and as far as the conciseness of the Author's plan would admit. To enlarge and expatiate would have been as easy on some topics, as to curtail ; for the Author might, at least, have conjectured most confidently, and pronounced his hypothesis as near infallibility, as that of some other authors : but where he has had but a

glimmering light to guide his steps, he thought it most safe to proceed with caution.

Whether persons who are pretty well versed in studies of this kind will find any new illustrations, the Author is not very confident to anticipate. But as in pursuing his investigations in British antiquities, he has been enabled to increase his own stock of historical knowledge; it may not be too presuming to suppose, that even respectable persons, in some degree versed in these matters, will find the present work worthy of their attention.

In the Appendix to this Volume will be found matter that could not be conveniently introduced into the body of the work. A concise vocabulary of the Welsh, Cornish, Armoric, and Irish languages, was designed to accompany the First Volume: but it was thought best not to delay the publication any longer; and what is here omitted, will probably appear with the Second Volume.

The Author of this work, not being in possession of an accurate list of Subscribers, begs leave, generally to return his cordial thanks to all who have patronised his undertaking: but the especial encouragement afforded him by some very respectable characters, will long be remembered with the sincerest gratitude.

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***ERRATUM.***

Page 52. line 28. for " Edward III." read " Edward I."

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# HORÆ BRITANNICÆ;

OR,

Studies in Ancient British History.

PART THE FIRST.

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*The Primitive Population and early History of the  
Isle of Britain.*

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**P**REVIOUS to our inquiries respecting the early history of Britain, and the people who inhabited it in remote ages, we shall introduce our subject by an account of the most probable conjectures as to the names given to this Island.

“This Island,” the authors of the *Universal History* observe, “was, in more ancient times, by way of distinction, stiled the Isle of Albion; the name of Britain being then common to all the islands that lie round it.” Hence Agathemerus, speaking of the British islands: “They are many in number, but the most considerable are Hibernia and Albion.” And Ptolemy, in the chapter in which he describes the island now called Great Britain, prefixes the following title: “The situation of Albion, a British island.” But as this far excelled the

other British isles, "the name of Albion, in process of time, was laid aside, and that of Britain, by way of excellency, used in its room, By this name it was known in Pliny's time." With all deference to such respectable authority, I would ask, If it be not as reasonable to suppose that our own island gave name to the islands connected with it; as that its name was first common to them all, and then appropriated to Great Britain itself?

The name *Albion* has been derived from a Celtic word, which formed the root of the Latin *albus-um*, white. In allusion to this, the British Chronicle says, "that it was anciently called *The White Island*:" but in the Cambro-British tongue, the same word which primarily signifies *white*, denotes also that which is fair or happy. According to others, *Albion* is to be derived from the same root as *Alban*, the ancient name of Scotland. *Alban* is compounded of *al* intensive, and *ban*, a high peak. "Scotland," Mr. Owen observes, "was thus called, either from its being the northern extremity of the island; or, from the mountainous part of it being so called, it became the general name of the whole country."

The high and lofty appearance of the cliffs of Dover may be fancied to have suggested the name of Albion to the inhabitants of the opposite shore. But I am more inclined to adopt the former opinion, as agreeing best with other appellations given to South Britain. And here we meet with a strange coincidence between the traditions of the east and of the west; that, as the ancient inhabitants of this country gave it the name of *Ynys Wen*, the White or Happy Island, so the chief of the sacred isles of the west went by the same name among the Hindus. This coincidence of names tends to corroborate, or at least to add, to the plausibility of the hypothesis of Captain Wilford; that the sacred islands of the west, on



which he has given us an essay in the *Asiatic Researches*, are no other than the British islands.\*

As to the name by which our favoured isle has been generally known, there have been various opinions as to the source from whence it is derived. Camden argues, with great propriety, that the name of this country is not derivable from any foreign tongue; for, as he observes, "every people, in ancient times, gave their own name to the country which they inhabited." These names were either descriptive of some prominent feature in the appearance or situation of the country; or else bore a reference to the name of some prince, or tutelary divinity. But where we find the name of a country identified with the name of an ancient hero or demi-god, we may naturally suppose that, previously, the primitive inhabitants gave some name to the land in which they lived.

But, although we contend for the name of our island being indigenous, we must inform the reader who is unacquainted with such kind of discussions, that some very learned men are firmly of opinion, that the true etymon of the name is Phœnician. This was the opinion of Bochart; and that learned foreigner has been thought fully competent to decide the point; as if a stranger could know more about this than a Briton. The word *Britannic*, or *Britannicæ*, said to be common to all the islands of our ocean, is, according to the great author alluded to, to be deduced from *barat-anak*, or *b'rat-anak*; i. e. *ager stanni*, or the land of tin; because Phœnician mariners fetched tin from hence. The authority of Bochart, and a foreign extraction, please some gentlemen better than what comes from home. The authors of the *Universal History*, and Mr. Gale, have sanctioned the opinion of Bochart.

\* See the *Chronicle of the Kings of Britain*, in the Introduction, and the *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. VIII.

Dr. Borlase, who rejects this etymology, derives the name from the Hebrew word *berith*, signifying separation, and *tan*, a region or country.

Mr. Camden and others, deriving the name from the British, refer it to the word *brith*, variegated or spotted; because the ancient Britons painted their bodies.

Mr. M'Pherson derives Britain from the Gaelic *Braid-in*, or the extended country or island. Some derive the name from *Pryd cain*, or bright aspect. Humphrey Lloyd proposed it first, and it has been adopted by some Welsh writers, but not generally received.

It is now proper to bring forward what appears to me as the most probable hypothesis; and here it must be observed, that, according to the genius of the ancient British tongue, the name of our island is not written with a B. as its radical initial, but a P., which is capable of assuming the sound of B., as its soft: the proper name, in its radical form, is Prydain, or Ynys Prydain. This name, according to our Cambrian lexicographers, Mr. Walters and Mr. Owen, imports comely or beautiful; from the word *pryd*, beauty, and the termination *ain*, which answers, as they teach us, to the word *ful*, at the end of many English words. Those who are little accustomed to the dryness of etymological criticisms, will perhaps have no aversion to so pleasing an interpretation. No one will disapprove of the patriotic appellation here supposed to be given by our ancestors to their country, which we have still better reasons than they had, to esteem the finest and happiest island of the globe.

Mr. Edward Williams, the bard, first suggested this etymon to his neighbour the Rev. Mr. Walters, and afterwards to Mr. Wm. Owen. I shall here subjoin an extract from a note in Vol. II. of Mr. Williams's ingenious Poems, published in 1794. "The strictly literal meaning of PRYDAIN is *beautiful*: nothing can be more

obvious than this etymology ; it is so demonstrably just that it cannot possibly admit of the least doubt ; and yet, strange as it may appear, it has never yet been given by any Welsh antiquarian whatever ; nor has any Welsh grammarian yet noticed the termination *ain*, in sense the same as the English *ful*, in beautiful ; though it ends a great number of words in the language :” of which several instances are given.

But, if we look into those ancient documents, the Triads, we are led into a very different view of our subject. What we find in them is both ingenious and entertaining.

The account they give is as follows:—“ The three names of the Isle of Prydain : before it was inhabited it went by the name of *Cld̃s Merddin*, or the water-girt region ; after its being inhabited, it received the name of *Y Vel Ynys*, or the island of honey ; but, after it was brought under regulation by *Prydyn*, (or Prydain,) the son of *Aedd*, it was called the island of Prydyn (or Prydain).\* ”

The last-mentioned name was the name of the first great legislator of the Britons, and of whom we shall have more to say presently. And it appears to me that the name of Merddin, or Meityn, may be considered as a proper name, denoting the Hesperus, or the evening-star, on account of the western position of our island ; so also *Vel* or *Bel*, (the *b* and the *v* being convertible into each other,) appears to be the name of the Apollo of the Britons.

If Prydain be a mythological name, then the person bearing that name was frequently considered as the guardian genius of the island, like Britannia and her lion, invoked in our heroic ballads.

\* By one of the ancient bards it is called *Ynys Vel Veli*, or the Honey Island of Beli.

As the author of these papers makes no pretensions to infallibility, the reader is here at liberty to use his own judgment; but all will agree that, whatever gave rise to the name of our country, that name will convey with it the sentiment of every thing great and noble, for ages after the author and his reader shall cease to be numbered among its inhabitants.

The name of the island and that of its ancient occupiers, are not deducible from the same source: the Cymry, or Cimbri, are said to have been the first people who came over; the *Brython*, Britons or Britones, were the next of whom we have any mention as a considerable colony; and this was the name under which the most ancient foreign writers, with whom we have any acquaintance, designated our ancestors. But this island must have been partially occupied for ages, before either the inhabitants or the country bore any one general appellation.

It may appear rather curious to state, that *Prydyn* was, at one time, used as the name of the northern part of the island. In an ancient poem, the Saxons are described as devastating the whole island, or all Loegyr and Prydyn, (all England and North Britain,) from the Severn to the sea of Lochlyn.

The old natives, as distinguished either from the Romans or the Saxons, are called Britons. But, among themselves, the inhabitants were distinguished by the names of the various territories: it was under the Romans that they received a general appellation. After the departure of the Romans, the name of Britons, and at other times that of Cymry, was particularly assumed by the inhabitants of those territories that refused submission to the Anglo-Saxons. The Irish were called *Gwydhel*, and Scot; and the natives of the North were called Picts, and Albanian Scots.

II.—IN the sketch I am about to give, by way of elucidating our early History, it is not designed to attempt any thing like a detail of national transactions in ages so remote, and involved in so much obscurity. I have only to trace, from our own rude and simple memorials, compared with the accounts of foreign writers, what appears to bear the stamp of probability, where certainty is not to be expected. Much has been done of late by men of genius and erudition, to facilitate our researches, by bringing ancient documents to light, and discussing the subjects contained in them. But when the result of much painful research is given to the world, those who have laboured in that field have many prejudices to oppose them: yet, it may still be said, to use the words of an ingenious writer,\* “That such inquiries are gratifying in themselves, wherever there is a hope of establishing important facts, or of making new and useful discoveries. To prejudices an author must be content to oppose the truth, as far as he has been able to ascertain it; and the weight of the greater probability, where certainty was not to be had; and leave it to time and observation to decide upon their united testimony.”

My business is to avail myself of the facilities afforded me; and to endeavour to give those who are not much versed in these studies, a brief outline of what appears to carry the resemblance of truth and consistency. Among our own national documents of the most valuable nature, we are to consider *the Triads*; of which a collection of what remains of them has been, a few years since, published from authentic manuscripts. These, from the singularity of their form, as well as the nature of their contents, bear the

\* The Rev. Peter Roberts, author of “A Sketch of the early History of the Cymry,” a work deserving of great commendation.

genuine stamp of antiquity ; some of them, there is reason to believe, being pure Druidical traditions. There are also many historical notices of importance in the remains of the early Welsh bards ; men who had not learned the art of making poetry the vehicle of fiction. They describe the woes they felt, the battles in which they had been engaged, and the calamities of the age and turbulent times in which they lived.

But the only source of information which many have had recourse to for the knowledge of ancient British History, has been the Chronicle of the Kings of Britain, commonly called Geoffry of Monmouth's History ; but Geoffry only translated the old Welsh Chronicle into Latin, yet not without some embellishments in passing through his hands. His name, among the Welsh, is Grifith ap Arthur ; but we have sufficient evidence that the main incidents, contained in his book, were none of his invention. Two copies of this Chronicle, in Welsh, have been published from respectable manuscripts, collated with two more, by Mr. Owen ; these purport to be transcripts of the work as edited by Walter de Mapes, archdeacon of Oxford, in the reign of Henry I.

Whatever variations may be found in different copies of the Welsh Chronicle, the ground-work is the same, and especially as it regards the origin of the British ; which is in them all attributed to one Brutus the Trojan, and his companions. Brutus is said to be the son of Silvius, the son of Ascanius, the son of Æneas. These Trojans, after meeting with many reverses of fortune, and having passed through various scenes of adventure in Greece, Italy, and Gaul, which are very circumstantially related in the Chronicle, at length found their way to Britain ; about the time that Samuel the prophet governed Israel. This island is said not to be utterly destitute of inhabit-

ants at that time ; and there were champions, whom Geoffrey calls giants,\* who strenuously opposed these invaders. Sensible persons have now agreed to reject this story of the Trojan origin of the British nation ; but surely it is worth while to inquire, what could give rise to this fabulous narration.

This fiction was current for some centuries before the time of Geoffrey and Walter de Mapes ; and was probably invented, as Mr. Owen supposes, by some Romanized Briton. It appears that Nennius was acquainted with it as a current tradition in his days ; and Taliesin † is supposed to allude to it in one of his poems. The former writer says, that there were two traditions of the origin of the Britons in his time ; the one of the nation itself, the other that of the Romans. “ The British tradition,” he says, “ derived the appellation of the island from Brutus, who was the son of Hisicyon, and he was the son of Alau-nus ;” but the other account attributed the origin of the nation to one Brutus, a Roman consul.‡

The account of Nennius appears to be either corrupted in transcribing the copy, or the author was involved in a very whimsical blunder. The tradition itself probably was this ; that the Britons were descended from a colony which came over to the island with one *Bruto*, the son of

\* These gigantes, or giants, must be attributed to Geoffrey's imagination ; for the Welsh word, so translated by him, denotes a king or general, for many ancient princes are so denominated. This Mr. Lewis Morris has amply proved, in a letter of his printed in the Cambrian Register, Vol. I.

† But it is denied by an ingenious antiquary, that Taliesin has any reference to this fabled Trojan origin of the Britons. It is true he speaks of “ Weddillion Caer Troia ;” but it is probable he speaks not of the genuine Britons, but of the Romans in Britain.

‡ A Bruto, filio Hisicionis, qui fuit filius Alani, vel ut alii dicunt a quodam Bruto Consule Romano.

*Hysicion*, who is said to be son of *Alan* or *Alanus*; that is, of the same race of people as the *Alani*. *Brito* was no other than *Prydyn*, the son of *Hu-ysgwn*; a name which, among the Romanized Britons, was changed first into *Hisicion*; and then, having the name of *Ascanius*, the Trojan, in their heads, with a confused tradition of a Trojan or Phrygian origin, *Brito* was changed into *Brutus*. As to the mention of a Roman consul, that in all probability was foisted in by some ignorant transcriber; at least, one not skilful enough to find out a *Brutus* among the immediate descendants of *Æneas*; and he made him into a Roman consul.

But this tradition of the Trojan origin of the British nation may be traced still farther back, so that we may be convinced that it was not the invention of Nennius, any more than of Geoffry of Monmouth. For, according to Ammianus Marcellinus, some of the Gauls had a tradition that they were descendants of the Trojans, which he thus relates: "*Aiunt quidam, paucos, post excidium Trojæ, fugitantes Græcos undique dispersos, loca hæc occupâsse tunc vacua.*"—"It is said that a few (*Trojans*), after the destruction of Troy, in making their escape from those Greeks who were dispersed abroad, took possession of these countries, which at that time were uninhabited." Nennius further says, that Brutus built a city in Gaul, which he called after the name of Turnus, one of his soldiers.\* Mr. Roberts's comment on this is so much to the present purpose that I shall take the liberty of giving it in his own words:—

"There can scarcely be a doubt but that Nennius had here the district of the Turones, that is, Touraine, in view. Now, Touraine comprehends the confluence of the Liger, or Loire, from the vicinity whereof the colony

\* Roberts's *Early History of the Cymry*, p. 57.



of the Loegrians came to Britain. This tradition may, therefore, be safely considered as that of the Loegrians in particular; though, in process of time, and from the ignorance of historians, who confounded it with the other; (a confusion to which the similarity of the names, Hysichion and Prydain, to Ascanius and Brutus, (if any such persons as the two last ever existed,) would contribute,) it came to be considered as the national tradition. The Loegrians then, having a tradition that they came originally from Phrygia, and the Cymry, that they came from Thrace: the expression of the Triad, *that both were of the same original stock*, was countenanced by the traditions of both."

The account contained in the Chronicle, of the division of the island among the three sons of Brutus, called Locrin, Camber, and Albanact, was probably the fiction of some Armorican Briton. The genuine tradition of the country was here turned into romance, by making three princes of the three nations mentioned in the Triads; the Cymry or Cambrians, the Loegrians, and the Albaneich, Albanian Scots or Highlanders.

Thus, even from the fabulous account of our old Chronicle, a glimmering light is thrown on some important particulars in our ancient history; if we have the patience and assiduity to look through the clouds of fiction which have obscured our old traditions.

As to the account of the British kings, from the first settlement of the nation under Hu-ysgwn and his son Prydain, called Brutus in the Chronicle,\* to Cassibelan, who fought with Cæsar, I refer the Reader to what Mr. Roberts has advanced on that head; but I have also given a list of them at the end of this disquisition.

\* *Hu-ysgwn*, or *Hu Gadarn*, was, in reality, the ideal patriarch; the Iacchus or Bacchus of the Cymry: and Prydain was perhaps no other than a personification of the island itself.

I shall now lay before the Reader the plain unvarnished accounts of the Triads, the simplicity of which, rude but venerable memorials, evince their genuineness, as depositaries of real national tradition; faithfully preserved, and handed down from age to age. Most nations have had some simple fragments of this nature, which ought to be highly esteemed for the light they throw on ancient history. The preservation of these may be attributed to the habits of the ancient bards, whose custom it was to commit to memory all that was important in history, literature, and science; according to the attainments they had made, and the knowledge of which they were possessed. The information of the aged was communicated to the junior disciples; and thus, in the midst of various scenes of national tumult and calamity, some valuable notices escaped the ravages of time: these, in the middle ages, were collected by some diligent antiquarians, and committed to writing. The conquest of Wales by the Anglo-Norman princes, and the destruction of the abbeys and monasteries by Henry VIII. have prevented our receiving a greater accession to our stores of historical information. But the fragments we possess deserve to be highly valued, and are worthy to be considered by the lovers of ancient history, and particularly that of their own country, in the same light as fragments of Roman and Grecian architecture are regarded by the lovers of the fine arts.

According to the Triads, mention is made of three colonies coming over from the continent in some remote age: "And the first is the *Cymry*, or Cymbrians; these came over the German Ocean, which they call *Môr Tawch*, or the hazy ocean, from the land of *Hævo*, or *Deffrobani*, 'where Constantinople now stands:' a remark, probably, of some ancient copyist. These came under the command of *Hu Gadarn*, who is styled the pil-

lar of his nation, for it was he who conducted the Cymry to Britain. It is said of him, that he aimed not at obtaining territory by war and contention, but in the way of equity and peace.\* The Cymry are stiled one of the three benevolent tribes, of which the second was ;

“ The Lloegrwys, the Loegrans or Ligurois, who came from the land of Gwasgwyn, and were sprung from the primordial race of the Cymry. The third was ;

“ The Brython, or Britons, who came from the land of Llydaw, (Letavia, Armorica, or Bas Bretagne ;) and were also sprung from the primordial race of the Cymry. These were denominated the three peaceable tribes, inasmuch as they came by mutual consent and permission ; and the three were of one language and of one speech.”

“ Three tribes came under protection to the isle of Britain ; they settled, with the leave and by permission of the Cymry, without weapon or assault : the first, was the tribe of the Celyddon, or the Caledonians, in the north ; † the second, was that of the Gwydhyl, or Gwydhelians, and these are now in Alban ; that is, in the highlands of Scotland : the third, was that of the men of Galedin, who came in their boats, (*llongau moelion*, or ships without sails,) to the Isle of Wight, when their country was overflowed, and were allowed a territory by the race of the

\* *Hu* is said to have taught his people the arts of husbandry, and to have recorded public events in verse, which indeed was the primitive mode of writing history. As to what is said of this *Hu Gadarn*, and the bursting of the lake, and his drawing the great monster out of that lake of waters, to prevent the recurrence of a general deluge : all this is mythological, and will be discussed in treating of the mythology of the Britons in a subsequent part of this work.

† These, it is observable, are distinguished in the next Triad from the Gwyddelian Picts, so that Welsh tradition does record the existence of a people who came over to North Britain from the Baltic, and of a different origin from either the Hibernian, Scots, or the original old Britons of the north.

Cymry: these had no privilege nor claim in the Isle of Britain, any more than a settlement in the land afforded them under limitations; and these could not be entitled to the rights of natives until the ninth generation.

“ Three usurping tribes came into the Isle of Britain, and never departed out of it. The first of these was that of the Coraniaid, who came from the land of the Pwyl, (or Poland, according to the etymology of the word, and according to the application of it to denote that country, by the modern Welsh :) the second, was the Gwyddelian Fichti, who came into Alban, over the sea of Llychlyn, or Lochlyn: the third, was that of the Saxons. It is further stated in this Triad, that the territory which the Coraniaid occupied was on the banks of the Humber, and on the shores of the German Ocean; and the Gwyddelian Fichti are in Alban, on the shore of the sea of Lochlyn. The Coraniaid,\* on the coming over of the Saxons, united with them, and incorporating themselves with that people, they deprived the Loegrians of their government, by wrong and oppression; and then they deprived the race of the Cymry of the monarchial crown. All the Loegrians became one people with the Saxons; those only excepted who are found in Cornwall, and in the Comot of Carnoban, in Deira and Bernicia.† It is further added, that the nation of the Cymry kept their coun-

\* The Coraniaid, or Coritani, occupied the finest part of England on each side of the Humber. These, no doubt, spoke a language very different from that of the old Cymry, and the Britons; their coalition with the Saxons must have greatly facilitated their conquests, and this explains the reason of there being no trace of the Cambro-British tongue in all the central counties,

† *Deityr* and *Brynych*, (or Deira and Bernicia,) comprised what was called the kingdom of Northumberland, or the three northern counties of England; with a great part of the south of Scotland. *Carnoban* was probably some part of Cumberland.

try and their language, although they lost the sovereignty of the Isle of Britain; owing to the treachery of the protected tribes, and the devastation of the three oppressive tribes."

It is observable, that by the time the materials of this last Triad were collected together, the distinction between the Loegrians and the Britons was lost, for those two tribes coming over probably about the same time, either became blended together, or the Britons became blended with the Cymry. After the Saxon invasion, and the establishment of the Saxon power, the inhabitants of England were known by no other name than that of Sæsson, and the country was called Loegyr; and this is the usage of the Cambro-Britons to this day.

It is asserted in the end of the Triad, which records the three names anciently given to the island, that, before the coming over of the Cymry, there were no human beings in it, but it was full of bears, wolves, otters, and wild oxen or buffaloes. From another Triad it appears, that, until the time of Prydyn, the son of Aedd, there were no settled laws for the maintenance of justice, and the defence of person and property; nor any regular mode of government. Dyfnval Moelmud, or Dunwallo Molmutius, afterwards completed what was still wanting; for to him is attributed the first formation of a national code of laws and institutes, for the perpetual preservation of good order, and the maintenance of justice.

III.—At what precise period of time this Island received its first inhabitants it is impossible to ascertain; but, from a variety of considerations, we are led to infer that Britain must have been peopled at an early period, not many centuries after the flood. Its contiguity to the continent of Europe would, of itself, lead to such a conclusion.

When Cæsar invaded this country it was full of inhabitants of different tribes and nations. The powerful forces afterwards raised by the native chiefs, to oppose the Roman armies in the time of Claudius, shew sufficiently how numerous the population of Britain was. In the country of the Silures and the Ordovices on that side, in that of the Iceni, Dobuni, &c. in the midland counties, as well as in Middlesex, Herts, Surry, Sussex, and Kent, which were the scenes of Cæsar's operations, the inhabitants were very numerous. The forces which mustered under the valiant Galgacus, in North Britain, lead us to draw a similar inference with respect to that part of the island.

A country thus situated, full of people, divided into different nations and clans, ranking under their different chiefs and sovereigns, must have been inhabited for ages. The natives of Britain, when discovered by the Romans, were acquainted with a variety of useful arts in civil life, and were dexterous warriors; although, in peace or war, they appeared rude when compared with the great masters of the world. The Romans, in order with greater ease to enslave them, and subdue their native fierceness, introduced among them the luxuries of polished life; and this artful policy, in time, effected what their arms could not.

The long establishment of Druidism, which Cæsar speaks of as a very ancient institution in Britain, serves also to prove the remote and early population of the country.

The following reasoning of an ingenious author on this subject is much to our purpose, as it sanctions the hypothesis of the early population of our island, by arguments drawn from the sacred annals of inspiration. "Noah and his sons," says Mr. Davies, "must have had some knowledge of the regions of the earth, as far as they had been known and inhabited before the flood. In

the act of partition, after the flood; they must have described their boundaries. The patriarchs, who took possession of the larger dominions, must afterwards have assigned to their children their due proportions; so that in an age or two after the first partition, every region of the known world, which was adapted to the support of human society, must have received that germe, which gradually expanded into its primitive nation: and thus Spain, and even Britain, were probably colonized by those who were born within a century of the flood." \*

The same respectable author proceeds to observe, that, "Moses, having enumerated the sons of Gomer and Javan, parallels in descents with Salah, who was born thirty-seven years after the flood, adds as follows: "By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided—in their lands—every one after his tongue—after their families—in their nations. If this be not a positive declaration that a regular and complete division, agreeably to certain general rules, actually took place, in the time and under the direction of these patriarchs, I know not by what words such a fact could have been recorded."

Every one may not be disposed to carry this argument to the extent that Mr. Davies has; and indeed I cannot be of the opinion that this part of the globe received its first inhabitants within less than two centuries of the universal deluge. The principle of the argument is sound that mankind were gradually dispersed over the globe, to people its various regions, in proportion as they increased; but, although this be admitted, we may well suppose that our island remained uninhabited, until four or five centuries after the flood.† Some considerable time must

\* See Celtic Researches.

† See Dr. Borlase's Antiquities of Cornwall, in the Introduction. See also the Sketch of British History, (chap. 5.) in the Cambrian Register, Vol. I.

have elapsed, after the general dispersion at Babel, before the different patriarchs had taken possession of the larger districts of territory; and then it must take some ages after, before the different subdivisions were allotted to the various heads of families, so as to plant its parent germe even in the most accessible parts of the globe. Asia and Africa were, in all probability, first peopled, and then the European shores of the Mediterranean; until, at length, Spain and Gaul, as well as Italy and Germany, were colonized. Thus the ancient world in general, in its continents and islands, may be supposed to be well inhabited before the time of Moses; and our island to have received its first inhabitants within five centuries of the flood.

If the race that came over with Brutus, or the first Prydyn, were the Loegrians, the time assigned for their emigration in the Chronicle may be correct, as there were inhabitants in the island when that people came into Britain; and they could be no other than the Cymry, whose very name signifies aborigines, or the parent race.\* Silivius, the son of Æneas, is said to have reigned over the Latins, about eleven hundred years before the Christian æra, so that in all probability some remarkable commotions taking place in Gaul about that time, may have been the occasion of some of the Gauls emigrating to Britain.

The Chronicle states, that twelve years after the death

\* We have seen before, that the tradition of a Trojan or Phrygian origin, is to be attributed to the Loegrian colony: now it appears to me to follow, as a just conclusion, that the colony of Brutus, or Prydyn, was that of the Loegrians and Brython, who found the Cymry in possession of the island. Upon the hypothesis of a very early population of this country, it is not improbable, that the Cimbri of the Roman historians were sprung from a people, who, on account of some great commotion at home, or excited by the love of plunder, left our isle of Britain to roam over the continent; and it must of course be well stocked with inhabitants many ages before Cæsar's time.



of Locrinus, Gwendolin, his queen, who had governed the kingdom during that period, gave the reins of government into the hands of her son Madawc; and this is said to be at the time that Homer flourished in Greece, and Samuel was prophet in Israel, and Silvius Æneas was living in Italy. The Cymry were in possession of the island, or rather some part of it, long before that time; and their number appears to have been considerable, from the formidable opposition made to the new colonies from Gaul. Their seats, as I am inclined to think, were principally on the shores of the Bristol channel; Cornwall, Devonshire, and Somersetshire, on the one side, and South Wales on the other, as far as the Wye, together with the country lying between that river and the Severn; as well as Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, and part of North Wales. From those regions they spread according to their occasions, in proportion to their increase; where they were not interrupted by impervious forests and deep morasses. Rising grounds, and the sides of hills, were in general deemed more favourable to their health, and more suitable for their flocks and herds, than the lowlands, then covered mostly with wood and stagnant lakes and marshes.

We have now to inquire who these *Cymry*,\* said to be the first occupiers of our island, were, and from whence they came over to Britain. These have generally been considered to be of the same stock as the Cimbri, or Cimmerii, of the continent, who in very remote ages were the same people as the Celtæ, but in after ages to be regarded as only a branch of that widely extended race. The Celtæ were, according to the best historians, the most an-

\* Humphrey Lloyd, in his Breviary of Britain, gives the name as *Cymbri*, and not *Cymry*; and this is more agreeable to the genius of the language, in which *i* is a common ending of names of nations, but *y* never. The *b* not being sounded, easily came to be dropped.

cient inhabitants of western Europe. "The ancient Greeks," says Mr. Davies, "appear to have placed them alone in our western continent, which they distinguished by their name. Ephorus, dividing the world into four parts, allotted the western to the Celtæ."

The Celtæ or Keltai were, according to some antiquaries, the same with the Gelatæ; and this name the same as Gael: but we must not depend on the etymology of names any further than as it accords with historical truth and consistency; and we should not forget, that a small branch of a nation may bear the name which was used as a general appellation for the ancient race from whom they are remotely sprung. Thus the inhabitants of Wales retain the patronymic name of Cymry, as peculiar to the people of their own small territory.

*The Isles of the Gentiles*, by which Europe in general is understood, (as the Hebrews gave the names of isles to all distant countries from which they were separated by the sea,) were, according to the sacted historian, given to the sons of Japheth, of whom Gomer has been considered as the father of the people who settled first in the west of Europe. This is far from being incontrovertible, as Tubal was the father of the Iberians, according to some authors, and Javan the father of the Ionians of Asia Minor, from whence some of the Europeans are thought to be deduced.\*

There is a curious passage in Josephus, where he comments on the tenth chapter of Genesis, and which M. Pezron has particularly noticed. "Japheth, the son of Noah, had seven sons; they inhabited so, that, beginning at the mountains Taurus and Amanus, they proceeded

\* Tacitus was disposed to consider the Silures as of Iberian origin. It is possible that at a very early period a colony from the shores of the Bay of Biscay, either through accident or design, might have found their way to Britain.

along Asia, as far as the river Tanais, and along Europe to Cadiz; and settling themselves on the lands they light upon, which none had inhabited before, they called the nations by their own names; for *Gomer founded those whom the Greeks now call Galatians, (Galatai), but were then called Gomarites.*"—Josephus, book i. chap. 6.

I have given the passage at large in Whiston's Translation; the words in italics being those which Pezron particularly refers to. He shews the Galatæ to be no other than the Gauls; for Celtæ and Galli, according to him, are the same name as Galatæ.\* In all branches of the Celtic the C, or K, was changeable for G; and, according to Isidore, bishop of Seville, by the Galatæ in his time, were meant the Gauls; for he says that Gomer was the father of the Galatians, that is to say, the Gauls. This learned author has also proved that the ancient geographers have made mention of a people in Asia called *Comarians*, or *Gomarians*. Ptolemy places these Comarians in Bactriana, near the Oxus; and another branch he places towards the most eastern boundaries of Sogdiana, not far from the sources of the Jaxartes, and in the country of the Sacæ: and Mela, he observes, places the *Comarians* towards Sogdiana and Bactriana; and a people called the *Chamarians* he places a little above the Caspian sea, towards the Massagætæ.

We understand from the prophet Ezekiel, that there was a nation that bore the name of Gomer; for the prophet speaks of Gomer and all his troops.

With regard to the Cimbri, or Cimmerians, who are supposed to be the same as our Cymry, or Cynbri, a branch of the Gomarians, or Celts, I shall subjoin another

\* A number of those Gauls who sacked Italy, and plundered Rome itself, found their way into Greece; and after they had loaded themselves with the spoils of the celebrated temple at Delphos, a party of them settled in Greece, and went by the name of Gauls, Grecians.

extract from Pezron, who, without subscribing implicitly to his whole hypothesis, is worthy of our regard for the great pains he has taken to illustrate ancient history.

“ A branch of the ancient Celts, who went under the name of *Sacæ*, after many roving, took a resolution to settle above the Euxine sea, towards the *Palus Mæotis*.

“ There it was that they changed their ancient names, and assumed that of Cimbrians, or Cimmerians, in Latin *Cimbri*, signifying warriors.” How Father Pezron makes this appellative to signify warriors he does not inform us; nor why that people should, at the period alluded to, change their name. Is it not more probable that the name of *Sacæ*, having been imposed upon them, they reassumed the name of *Cimbri*? “ Being thus about the *Palus Mæotis*, and having fixed their habitations, they communicated their name to that famous streight which has since been called the Cimbrian, or Cimmerian *Bosphorus*. These Cimbrians, the offspring of the Asiatic *Sacæ*, were, without doubt, the true Celtæ. It is very probable that an ancient colony of these *Cimbri*, from the *Palus Mæotis*, came and gave name to the *Cimbric Chersonesus*, now called Jutland, and subject to the Danes.”—Pezron’s *Antiquities*, book i. chap. 7.

These conclusions agree with the *Triads*, and very curiously tend to establish what *Sheringham* has aimed to prove, that the *Cymry* were in remote ages the same people, as their subsequent invaders the *Vites* or *Iutes*, who coalesced with the *Angles* and the *Saxons*, to deprive the *Cymry* of their dynasty of the isle of Britain. See also Mr. *Roberts’s Sketch*, p. 34. and the curious should consult that ingenious essay in the *Cambrian Register* on the early history of the Britons.

We shall now revert to the accounts contained in the *Triads*, respecting the *Cymry* and the other tribes who

anciently obtained a settlement in Britain. The Cymry are positively stated to be the first occupiers of the soil, and as such, considered themselves ever after as the rightful, because the original, proprietors. I have offered some considerations on the obscure subject of the æra of the first settlement; and it appears a just conclusion that Britain received its first inhabitants within five centuries of the flood. The name of the Cymry appears to imply as much as Aborigines;\* and from the claim they continually made of their rights as such, it is natural to suppose they would be proud of such a name. They afterwards became blended with the two cognate tribes of the Loegrians and Brython; and the latter name became the prevalent one among foreigners, and the most general at home.

IV.—The Cymry, as we have shewn, have been considered to be the same race of people as the Cimbri of the continent; and the history of the emigrations of that people has been resorted to for establishing the controverted point of the æra of the first colonization.

The knowledge of this depends much on the country from whence the first settlers came; and this, according to the Triads, was what they call the land of *Hdv*, or the Summer country, which no doubt was Asia; and the particular district or region is called *Defrobani*, or perhaps *Drefrobani*. The explanation of the ancient copyist, who subjoins the comment, “Where Constantinople now stands,” is certainly very curious; and, if just, gives us a

\* Caesar says, that the people of the interior parts of Britain considered themselves the Autocthones, as their ancestors had, from time immemorial, occupied the country. *Britanniæ pars interior, ab us incolitur; quos natos in insula, memoria proditur. De Bell. Gall. l. 5.*

precise view of the ancient seat of the people, who after successive migrations settled in this island.

“ This Comment, the author of Celtic Researches remarks, is not without some authority, and belongs to an age which possessed many documents relating to the history of the Britons, and which are no longer extant. *Hdv*, in our old orthography, would be *Hdm* ; it may import Hæmus, or Hæmonia. *Deffrobani* may either be *Dy-cro-banau*, the land of eminences or high points, Thrace in general ; or else *Dycrobanuz*, the land or vale of the *Pencus*, Thessaly, Hæmonia.” Celtic Researches, p. 165.

Mr. Roberts’s conjecture is rather different from this : that *Deffrobani*, or *Drefrophani*, (it being written both ways,) may be a compound of *Dre-fro* and *Phani*, the Town of the Hill, or the township of the Phani.\* This was suggested, by observing that the syllable *Phan* occurs as a distinct part of proper names, of which several are instanced.

The ingenious author last referred to, as well as Mr. Davies, has shewn the great similarity existing between the traditions and the mythology of the Thracians and the Britons. This may be considered as some further evidence of the Thracian origin of the Cymro-Britons.†

If the Cimbri of the continent were the same with the Cymry of the Triads ; and as, according to Mr. Roberts, they could not, after various emigrations from the Cher-

\* As *Dre* signifies a residence or site, as well as a town, and *bro*, or *fro*, a region (and in South Wales, a vale, or flat country) the word may signify that vale or country where the Phani resided, which comes much to the same as Mr. Davies’s conjecture.

† The Thracian bards were celebrated in ancient history ; and the Thracians marked, or tattooed, their bodies, like our ancestors, according to Herodotus.

sonese, have arrived here before 700 A. C.,\* then it is reasonable to suppose, that this country had been in part inhabited before the coming over of the Cymry. As to what the Triads assert to the contrary, it may be true with respect to the part of the island where they settled, and yet the western coast of the island may have received inhabitants before their coming.

Spain and Gaul must have been inhabited long before then, and Britain could not remain entirely uninhabited for any length of time after the continent had been stocked with inhabitants.

According to the Welsh Chronicle, Brutus or Brito came over before the time of Samuel the prophet, and the reign of Silvius Æneas in Italy; and even at that time there were a race of people in possession of the island, who I am inclined to believe inhabited the western part of the kingdom.

It appears that at some period previous to the Christian era, this country sent forth a strong host to the continent; and these were the people that so greatly infested the Romans, and were at last overcome by Marius. The accounts of these warlike marauders, in the classic writers, very plausibly confirm the hypothesis of our antiquaries, that those Cimbri were of the same race as our Cymbri of Britain. Mr. Humphrey Lloyd, in his Breviary, has discussed this subject; and, from the names and appellations found in Plutarch and Pausanias, thinks he has discovered a plain affinity in their languages.

If our British Cymry be allowed to be the same race with the Cimbri of the classic authors, this will not, of itself, prove that the Cymry were the first settlers in Britain, if that people be admitted to have come over at

\* Mr. Roberts, in his Appendix to his Translation of the British Chronicle, has acknowledged a change of sentiment with respect to the migration of the Cymry from Asia.

so late a period as Mr. Roberts supposes ; for we shall, in the course of these investigations, be able to afford some further confirmation of the opinion of a far earlier date for the primary population of Britain. But if the appellation of Cymry, Cymbri, or Cymbrians, was assumed by the first inhabitants of Europe, who pushed forward to the west soon after the dispersion at Babel, we have no need to suppose that our primitive settlers were the descendants of a people who bore the same name in times so much later. As far back only as a thousand years from the flood, the Cymbrians, or the immediate descendants of Japheth, were become widely diffused over the most accessible parts of Europe, in different small communities ; some of whom still retained their parent name.—See the Historical Sketch, C. R. chap. 3.

With respect to the Brython and the Loegrians, it does not appear from the Triads how soon after the Cymry they came over ; but they, by some means, gained the superiority over the Cymry, who appear to have lost their name in that of the Britons, a name which, in modern times, the united nations and tribes of this island glory in ; whether descendants of the ancient inhabitants, or derived from the Anglo-Saxons, Danes, or Normans.

“ The Loegrians, according to the Triads, came from Gascony, and were descended from the original stock of the Cymry ; but as to the Britons, they are said to be of a common descent with the Cymry.

“ The distinction,” says Mr. Roberts, “ between the Loegrians and the Brython, is remarkable ; the latter were of a common descent with the Cymry, and evidently descendants of those who went to Armorica, when Hu and his followers came to Britain. The Loegrians were not of the same immediate descent, though originally of the same stock. The latter were Gauls of the Loire, whose territory from thence to the Pyrenness appears to



have been denominated Gwasgwyn, that is Gascony, by the Welsh writers. In what part of the island these Brython were stationed does not exactly appear ; but the Gauls, according to the Triads, were settled partly in Cornwall, and partly to the north of the Humber.”

The opinion of this ingenious author, with respect to the language of the Loegrians, that it was Gaelic or Irish, does not appear to be well founded. As he supposes the Britons to have settled on the south-east, and the other tribe to have settled in the mountainous part of the kingdom, we cannot find any particular traces of the Irish dialect in the mountainous or western parts of the island.\* We shall presently see that a respectable author makes the eastern part of the kingdom the more remarkable for relics of the Gwyddelian, or Irish.†

The affinity of language and tradition among these ancient settlers, made them consider each other as descended from the same line of ancestors. We have mentioned before that some of the Gauls, in the days of Ammianus Marcellinus, had a tradition that they were of Trojan descent ; and it was the tradition of the Cymry that their ancestors came from Thrace ; at least this has been attributed to them by old writers. But how long this tradition had prevailed among the Gauls, or how far back it may be traced, we are not able to determine : we find ourselves obliged to remain satisfied that such an ancient tradition existed, and perhaps independently of the fabulous accounts of the Roman historians. It is, however, probable that the most ancient Gauls and Britons were of the same race ; and it would appear from the Triads that

\* The Loegrians are expressly said in the Triads to have been seated in Cornwall, and in the Comot of Carnoban, or the country of the Ottadini. The inhabitants of Wales, it would appear, were considered as genuine Cymry.

† See also the Cambrian Register, Vol. II. pag. 5.

Gaul and Britain were peopled, or received their first important acquisition of inhabitants, in about the same age, and from the same parent stock.\*

We have pursued this subject beyond the limits we had proposed, and must therefore proceed to close this part of the preliminary Essay, after we have collected some remarks on those tribes who settled by consent of the three first colonies, and those other tribes who came over in the way of hostility.

Polydorus Virgilius falls very severe on our Geoffry of Monmouth for the fictions contained in his Latin History. Geoffry, as we have shewn, was not the inventor of that History; but Polydore may be allowed to say whatever he pleased respecting the fable of the supposed Trojan colony. Considered with all the circumstances of the relation as we have it in the old Chronicle, it is sufficiently ridiculous; but the whole probably arose from making Brito the son of Hysicion, or Prydyn the son of Hysygwn, into Brutus the Trojan: this was partly countenanced by the ancient tradition of the Druids, that the

\* This is not designed to apply to the whole of Gaul, or Britain, but to certain parts of both countries. The Edui are said to be the principal people in Gaul; and we have the descendants of the British Edui in Somersetshire; a country, it is singular, called by the Welsh *Gwlad yr hâv*, the very name given to the country from whence the first colony is said to come to Britain. Was not Prydyn, the son of Aedd, a prince of the Edui?

Beda was utterly ignorant of the first colonists, for he makes the Britons from Armorica to be the original settlers. His words are:—"In primis, hæc insula Britones solum, a quibus nomen accepit, incolæ habuit; qui de tractu Armoricano. (ut fertur) Britanniam advecti, australes sibi partes illius vindicârunt." It appears evident that he was acquainted with the tradition of the natives, respecting that colony which is made the second in the Triads; and the name of Britons now in his time being the distinctive appellation of the old inhabitants in general, he was not aware that the island had any inhabitants before the Armorican Britons came over.

Cymro-Britons were of Thracian origin. Mr. Wynne, in the Preface to his edition of Dr. Powel's History of Wales, has vindicated Geoffry against the aspersions of the Italian Polydore: but whatever spleen that foreigner shewed against our Ancient History, it must be allowed that his thoughts respecting the first peopling of our island are sober and judicious; and, as I am wedded to no hypothesis, I shall refer to his words in Vol. I. pag. 38. of his History:—"Itaque cum insula a Gallico littore, claris præsertim diebus facile cernatur; haud ullo unquam tempore ipsius continentis populo incognita esse potuit. Quare incredibile est, eam aliquando habitatoribus caruisse, quæ eodem tempore, ac ceteræ acceperunt terræ, eos accipere potuit, et non expectare aut ab Hispaniâ, Germaniâ, Galliâ, vel Latio, uti recentiores scriptores fecerunt, incolam exulem aut profugum, ac sæpe nocentem. Hinc proinde credere licet, ab ipso prope orbis initio; insulam habitatam fuisse et eandem post diluvium Noe, una cum aliis terris, suos habitatores accepisse, quos Cæsar indigenas vocat." That is;

"As the island, when the weather is fair, may be clearly seen from the opposite shore, it never could have been at any period unknown to the inhabitants of the continent. It is, therefore, an incredible supposition that it should remain uninhabited; whereas it might have received its inhabitants much about the same time as other countries; without waiting, as our more modern authors have pretended, for some runaways or criminals to arrive from Spain, or Germany, or France. Hence I am induced to believe that the island was inhabited from the remotest period of the world; and that, after the universal deluge; it, with other nations, received its first inhabitants; whom Cæsar calls Indigenæ, or primitive occupiers of the land."

V.—Three tribes, according to the Triads, came under protection into Britain ; obtaining settlements in the island as friends and associates. The first was the Celyddon, or Caledonians ; the second, the Gwyddyl, or Gwyddelians ; and the third was the men of Galedin.

The Celyddon were the old Caledonians, or the Gael of the Scotch antiquaries ; and the Gwyddelians must have been a branch of the same people ; and both are said to have settled in Alban. I do not pretend to investigate any controverted statements respecting the Highland nations ; even in the time of Agricola's invasion of Caledonia, there were a variety of tribes in that part of Britain, which evidently proves that country, as well as South Britain, to have been very anciently peopled. If all the Triads had been preserved, we should be in possession, most probably, of some further information respecting the ancient population of Caledonia. From the Poems of Ossian a good deal might be conjectured on the subject.\*

As to the etymology of the words *Celyddon* and *Gwyddyl*, the reader is referred to Mr. Owen's Dictionary ; according to whom the names are descriptive of a people who lived in a wild or sylvan state. The terms were originally applied to those who were addicted to a venatic life in woods, and among the mountains, in opposition to the inhabitants of the plains, or the cultivated country. " Hence," says our lexicographer, "*Gwyddelod* is the general term in Welsh for the natives of Ireland, because the tribes, of which the name is descriptive, appeared predominant to those who imposed it. There is a tradition of Wales being once inhabited by the Gwyddelians ; or, more properly, its first inhabitants were so called : and the common people, in speaking of it, as-

\* See this subject further discussed.

tribe some ruins about the country under the name of *Cyttiau y Gwyddelod*, to them; and the foxes are said to have been their dogs, and the polecats their domestic cats, and the like."

Etymology may be rendered very serviceable in prosecuting our researches into ancient history; but by placing too great a dependence on verbal criticisms, we are bewildered rather than assisted in our pursuits. The etymology of names may easily prove fallacious, if not grounded on certain general principles, and made to appear consistent with the general truth of history. Linguists and antiquaries, of no mean note, such as Camden, Baxter, and Whitaker, have fallen into very whimsical theories, grounded upon etymological fallacies. Mr. E Lloyd, and Mr. Owen, are generally happy in their conjectures; but men of the greatest skill in those studies are not seldom betrayed into erroneous conclusions by a misapplication of names and appellative terms, and adhering too rigidly to the literal import of them. It should be recollected that different families of the same tribe were accustomed to adopt certain appellations arising from their local situation and habits, similar to the terms by which whole nations and tribes were usually distinguished from each other. It should also be observed, that ancient, or primitive appellations, have continued in use, when the reason for assuming or imposing such names have ceased. Appellations also, in process of time, become more limited in their acceptance; and sometimes the reverse has happened, that the name of one tribe has predominated, and been applied to the whole nation. These remarks are suggested by Mr. Owen's exposition of the appellatives *Celyddon* and *Gwyddel*.

The *Gael*, or *Gaddel*, and the *Gwyddyl*, appear to be words of a similar import, and to be distinguished from

*Gâl* and *Galli*, the losing sight of which has led to some confusion in ancient history. Mr. Owen is, therefore, just in his remarks in setting *Gâl* in opposition to the *Gwyddyl*; and as many of my readers may not be in possession of his grand production, The English-Welsh Dictionary, I subjoin what he has advanced on the article *Gâl*.

“ The Cymry, though they were generally careful of preserving their patronymic name, were often called after-names, characteristic of the country they inhabited. The two most universal of which being the open plains and the woods; hence originated the two grand distinctions of *Gâl* and *Celt*,\* or the open plains and the covert; with others of similar import. Of the same meaning with *Gâl*, and its derivations, are *Gwâl*, *Prydain*, *Peithyw*, *Gwynedd*, *Gwent*, and *Syllwg*, fair or clear regions. With *Celtioid*, may be classed the *Gwyddel* or *Gwyddeled*; the *Ysgotoid*, or *Ysgodogion*; and *Celyddon*, the people of the coverts; of whom it is remarkable to observe, that not one became so powerful and stationary as to confer its name on the country. These two classes subsisted by different means, the result of which must, of necessity, have been a state of warfare: hence, with the *Celt*, the appellation of *Gâl* came to be synonymous with enemy; for, as the *Gâl*, or cleared region, became too fully peopled, it sent out colonies in search of other settlements, to occupy which war must frequently have been the consequence.

But, to proceed with the other tribes mentioned in the Triads: by the men of Galedin, we understand no other

\* These names may be very plainly distinguished on the continent in the Gauls and the Celtæ; the latter being swallowed up in the former in process of time. As the first inhabitants of Europe lived a kind of venstic life in the woods, we see how the name of Celtæ prevailed so widely.

than the Belgæ, who, sometime previous to the Roman invasion of Julius Cæsar, were settled in the island.\* These, it is affirmed in the Triads, came in their boats to the Isle of Wight, when their country was overflowed, and were allowed a territory by the natives. But, although the first of these that came over were received as distressed people, from motives of humanity; yet soon after them more numerous hordes followed; as the inhabitants of all the south-east, when Cæsar landed, appear to be a different race from the primordial Britons. The sea coast he considered as occupied by those who came over from Belgium, or the Low Countries, for the sake of plunder and warfare.

This had been done successively, so as to drive the old inhabitants further up the country; but if the Cymry had ever occupied that side of the island, it must have been many ages back. The Belgæ are the same people as the *Fir Bolg*, the race of Bolga, whose descent on the Irish coast became the occasion of many wars in our sister island, as celebrated by the muse of Ossian.

The first coming over of the Belgæ must have been about four hundred years, at least, before Christ; for, by the time of Cæsar, not only Kent and Sussex, but Hants, Dorset, Wilts, Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall, were occupied by their descendants, and bore their names. Thus a race of people, who in the first instance were received into the island as unfortunate men, whose distressed situation urged a strong claim on the humanity of the na-

\* Within less than two centuries of the Christian æra, Divitiacus, the Eduan, invaded this island with a powerful force, and subdued a great part of the southern coast. Mr. Whitaker, in his History of Manchester, has ably investigated the subject of the coming over of the Belgæ, and has considered the wars occasioned thereby in Britain as the principal means which conduced to the peopling of Ireland from this island.

tives, like the Saxons in a posterior age, abused the hospitality of the Britons, rose up against them, and deprived them of a great part of their country. It may accord with the truth of history, that the first Belgæ came over in distress, and had lands assigned them by the natives; and that others afterwards came over, as Cæsar affirms, in a hostile and predatory manner.

It is not improbable that the Coraniaid, or Coritani, were of a kindred stock with the men of Galedin. These are spoken of as a hostile tribe, who made extensive conquests, and had their first settlements on the banks of the Humber and the shores of the German Ocean.

The Coraniaid are said to come over from the land of Pwyl, (or of Pools), a name which Mr. Davies supposes to denote Holland, but I should rather consider some part of Poland to be the country alluded to.

They were probably the same as the Coitani, and Coritani, of the Roman geographers, who got possession of the counties of Leicester, Rutland, Lincoln, Nottingham, and Derby; and they had Ragæ, or Leicester, for their capital.—See Richard of Cirencester, and Whitaker's Manchester.

They might have received the name of Coritani, or Coraniaid, from *côr*, a sheep; and the name of Coitani from *coed*, or *coid*, a wood; their country being woody and appropriated to pasturage.

The situation which the Coritani occupied on the eastern shore, partly accounts for what is stated in the Triads, where they are said to have joined the Saxons, and to have coalesced with them, so as to become one people and nation. The inhabitants of the western coast, who were descended from the primitive settlers, the Cymry and the Brython, were situated at a greater distance from the German Ocean, the point of invasion; and when at length they were attacked by the Saxons and Angles,



they held out to the last extremity, in Cornwall, Wales, and Cumberland.

Mr. Davies, in his *Celtic Researches*, has made it appear, that the Coraniaid of the Triads could have been no other people than the Coritani of the Romans. Of this race of people, several tribes may be traced in Ireland and in Scotland. In distinguishing between them and the Aborigines, Mr. Davies has drawn the line with his usual acuteness and ingenuity, and to what he has advanced I refer the Reader:—

That gentleman observes, “That when Cæsar arrived in Britain, the Aborigines were those of the interior parts, and of the western coast. Their character and their habits were different from those of the other Britons, with whom Cæsar fought. We are not apprized, and have no reason to conjecture, that he saw the interior inhabitants. The armies that opposed him were similar in their general habits, in their military art and resources, to each other, as they were also to the Belgæ of Kent; though headed by a prince of the Cassii or Catti, of Herts and Middlesex; and though consisting in part of the Ceni Magni, or I Ceni, of Norfolk, Suffolk, &c.”

Upon this subject I shall subjoin the following paragraph: “The monuments we call Druidical must be appropriated, exclusively, to the Aborigines of the midland and western divisions. They are found in such corners and fastnesses as have, in all ages and countries, been the last retreat of the conquered, and the last that are occupied by the victorious. In Wales and in Mona, they were used and venerated, until the Aborigines were completely subjugated by Roman arms. In the central counties, and in the west, they perpetually occur, from Cornwall to Cumberland; whereas, comparatively, few traces of them are discovered in the eastern part of the

island;\* which, therefore, appears to have been occupied by those people who did not construct buildings of this nature, and who obtained possession before the Aborigines deeply impressed their character on the soil."

Our author adds, "The very same description of tribes which are found in this part of England, frequently occurs in Ireland, in Scotland, and in the known possessions of British Belgæ; but scarcely ever in Wales, or in those inland counties of England which border upon that principality."

To distinguish with exactness between the Belgæ and these Coritani, as to the places and situations they occupied, would require great nicety of discrimination. But as the Belgæ spread westward, as far as Wiltshire, Somersetshire, Devon, and Cornwall, the Coritani appear to have extended in a very opposite direction on the banks of the Humber, and into Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, and Derbyshire.

Mr. Pinkerton has conjectured that these tribes, distinguished from the Aborigines, ought to be considered the main stock from which the English nation is sprung. The few Saxons and Angles that repeatedly came over in the fifth and sixth centuries, and of whom many fell in battle, could never be the parents of such a nation as that which possessed England in the time of Bede and of Alfred. Those invaders received into their alliance or subjection, all the old inhabitants of the eastern coast; and the Triads affirm they became one people with them. The conquerors, as usual, imposed their own names on those whom they had subjugated. The language also of

\* In Kent, it should be recollected, we have one of the most remarkable monuments in Britain, the famous Kit's Cotty house, which there can be no doubt is the Maen Cetti of the Triads; the erection of which is said to be one of the three stupendous feats of Britain.

the Coritani, was probably allied to that of the Saxons, according to Pinkerton ; it must, at any rate, be different from that of the Cymry : the same may be said also of the Belgæ, among whom were a mixture of Goths, and therefore the language they spoke must be considered as different from that of the southern Celtæ, although there is not sufficient reason to believe them to have been genuine Goths.\*

It has been supposed by some of our antiquaries, and not without reason, that the British Belgæ spoke the same language as the Gwyddelians, or ancient Irish ; and many of the Belgæ went over to Ireland, and retained their language there.

“ Doubts have been entertained,” says Davies, “ respecting this language, in consequence of Cæsar’s assertion, that many of the Belgæ originated from Germany. But this does not prove them to have been of the Gothic family, who, in the time of Cæsar, were not the sole, nor perhaps the most numerous, inhabitants of Germany.

“ Those of the Belgæ, who were called Germans, were most probably Celtic tribes, whose removal to the west of the Rhine was in the memory of tradition. It is probable, then,” Mr. Davies concludes, “ that even these tribes used the Gaulish language ; and, indeed, it appears that very few of those who inhabited the west of the Rhine spoke the German.”

Mr. Edward Lhuyd was so struck with certain names and appellations to be found in some parts of the island, that he was led to conclude that a Gwyddelian race had occupied Britain prior to the Cymry ; who, upon their arrival, drove them northward and westward. He observed also some words retained in our Cymraeg, whose radicals we have lost ; but they are retained in the Irish.

\* See Pinkerton’s Geography, and the Celtic Researches.

But if either the Belgæ, or the Coritani, who came over to Britain, spoke a language which was of nearer affinity to the Gwyddelian than the Cymraeg, and several of this people migrated to Ireland, this difficulty is accounted for ; while, at the same time, it shews that the Belgæ had come over not long after the first settlers, whom they compelled to give way to them ; as the names of rivers and hills are generally of remote antiquity.—See Mr. Lhuyd's Welsh Preface to his *Archæologia Britannica*, and the Historical Sketch in the *Cambrian Register*, Vol. II.

VI.—As to the Gwyddyl Fichti, or the Gwyddelian Picts, mentioned in the Triads as an hostile people, they can be no other than the confederated Scots and Picts, who committed such ravages in the fourth and fifth centuries, on the province of Roman Britain.

The Picts, or Fichts, have been considered as a people who came from the Baltic ; and who, first possessing themselves of the Orkneys, settled afterwards on the north-east coast of Scotland, until they at length extended their possessions as far as the Lothians, or part of the kingdom of Northumberland. Their first coming to Britain was, according to Bede, about A. D. 78 ; so that before the time of Maximus, when they first are spoken of as marauders and plunderers, they must have blended themselves with the more ancient inhabitants ; and we may suppose some of them may have mingled with the troops collected under Galgacus, to oppose the Roman forces under Julius Agricola.

The name of Picts has been supposed to be given this people, owing to the custom of painting their bodies ; although we know it was unusual with the Romans to give names, purely Latin, to foreign nations. The name of the people, could it be ascertained from what language

it springs, would settle the dispute of their origin ; which Whitaker, Henry, Smollett, and M'Pherson, as well as Camden, contend to be the same as the Caledonian Britons. Mr. Whitaker derives the name from *gwyth*, divorced, or separate, on account of their being out of the Roman province, and enemies to the Roman power. But no such word can be found, I believe, in any dialect of the Celtic. If the names of Fichts, Vichts, or Vechts, be derived from the same root as Vectis and Vecturiones, it is probably Teutonic, and this would prove the Scandinavian origin of that people.

Verstegan has very readily affirmed that it is so ; as he makes the name to be Fichtian, or Fighters. I shall not contend with that antiquary, although my thoughts of his etymologies may not be so high as those entertained by some of his admirers. If the *Picts* were the same as the *Brythwyr* of the Welsh bards, the name of *Picti*, given them by the Romans, accords with the signification of the British word.

We have some reason to infer, that the language of the *Picts* was rather different from that of the Britons, as well as the Hibernian Scots. Some traces of the Welsh may be found far to the north of Scotland, in the names of towns and rivers ; but the *Picts* may have retained such appellations, as there are similar names in some parts of England, which originate from the old British. Besides, when the *Picts* had subdued the old inhabitants, these might, in many parts of the country, long retain their own language. Ninian, the apostle of the South *Picts*, was a Briton ; and his language, it is reasonable to suppose, differed no great deal from theirs. But Bede assures us, that the *Picts* had, in his time, a language of their own, distinct from the Britons, the Scots, and the Anglo-Saxons, as he makes mention of five languages then spoken in the island : namely, that of the Britons,

the Scots, the Anglo-Saxons, the Picts, and the Latins.\*

The Picts were divided into two nations; the *Deucalidonii*, or the Southern Picts, and the *Vecturiones*, or Northern Picts. The first, we may infer from the name, which has a British sound, and implies that the language of the primitive inhabitants continued to prevail in their territory, although subject to the Picts, for *Deu*, or *Deheu*, is pure British for south; and the *Deucalidonii* inhabited the southern part of Caledonia. The *Vecturiones*, or the inhabitants of the north-east, betray in their name their genuine descent from the *Vechts*, their ancestors;† but the Pictish dominions, in the fifth and sixth century, appear to have extended over all the country northward of the two Firths, and the Wall of Antonine, until they were overpowered by the Scots, who at length gave their name to the whole country.

As to the Gwyddelian, or Hibernian Scots: the antiquaries of Ireland and North Britain, have had high disputes respecting the genuine country of the Scots. Ireland, undoubtedly, was the true and real *Patria Scottorum* of the Latin ecclesiastical writers; and it cannot be proved that our Albaen, or Caledonia, was called *Scotia*, before the tenth or eleventh century. Ireland, it is true, was called *Y Werddon*, or the western country; and

\* Hæc in præsentī juxta numerum librorum, quibus lex Divina scripta est, quinque gentium linguis, unam eandemque summæ veritatis et veræ sublimitatis scientiam scrutatur et confitetur; Anglorum videlicet, Britonum, Scottorum, Pictorum, et Latinorum.—Beda, in Eccles. Hist. lib. i. cap. 1.

† Bishop Lloyd considers the names of the two divisions of the Picts, as implying the southern and northern in the British language; making *Deucalidones* and *Vecturiones* to be the same as *Dencilyddion* and *Chwithorion*: the first part of each word signifying south and north, and at the same time the right and left.

*Tyle'r Iscoed*, or the residence of the Scots, by the old Britons; and North Britain was called *Iscoed y Celyddon*, or Scotia of the Caledonians; so that we ought not to be too severe on our Scotch antiquaries, for their reluctance in conceding the point that the name of their nation is borrowed from the sister island. In truth, it appears that the name of *Iscoed*, afterwards Latinized into *Scotia*, might, as an appellative, have been applied to various countries; whereas, in history, the name of *Scots* distinguished the inhabitants of Ireland, although their country was not so generally termed Scotia.

It appears from the Poems of Ossian, that a very intimate intercourse subsisted between the Albanian Scots and the Hibernians: they mutually assisted each other in their wars, and their princes married into each other's families. The first inhabitants of Ireland, according to Richard of Cirencester, came from South Britain, which hypothesis respecting the planting of that country Mr. Whitaker has contended for with his usual ingenuity. When the first comers had settled in the island, and were afterwards disturbed by subsequent invasions of the Belgæ from Britain, in consequence of the conquest of their territories by other tribes, who continued to come over from the continent, the old British settlers in Ireland sent over to require the assistance of the Creones and others from Caledonia. The wars occasioned by these contests are celebrated by the muse of Ossian; and a variety of passages appear to afford strong evidence that the Fingalians of Scotland, and many of the Irish tribes, were of the same kindred stock, and both probably in part of Gothic extraction.

The first occasion of the Scots settling themselves in Caledonia, according to Whitaker, was owing to the failure of the royal line in that country: this happened about the year 390. The kings of Ireland being, equally

with the sovereigns of the Creones, descended from Tremmor, and his elder line failing in Ossian, "the last of the race of Fingal," the crown of the Creones devolved to the younger, the family of Conar, and the monarchs of Ireland. Ossian lived long after the rest of the family, long after Fingal had "fallen asleep with his race of battle;" as he had seen a new generation arise that "marked no years with their deeds." He died in an advanced old age, and about the year 320. The monarch of Ireland sent his son Fergus over with a body of troops, and the authority of a sovereign: he landed, took possession of the crown, and settled his Scots in the country. In the year 340, these Scots joined the Picts in their incursions into the country between the two great walls, now called the South of Scotland; and, being afterwards joined with an accession to their number from Ireland, they extended their ravages further and further into the province, as they became emboldened by the trial of their own strength.—See History of Manchester, book i. cap. 12. sec. 4. Ossian's Poems, and the Dissertations prefixed.

VII.—Before we close this subject, it may be requisite to notice the early intercourse of the Phœnicians with this country; from which some have inferred that they were the first discoverers, and the first colonizers, of this island.

The ancient Greeks were acquainted with the name of the Cassiterides, as far back as the time of Herodotus; but the Greeks themselves had then no actual acquaintance with the British islands; and the Phœnician merchants took all possible care to keep their traffic with Britain a profound secret.

It has been supposed that the first discovery of Britain by the Phœnicians, was in consequence of the voyage of Hamilco, the Carthaginian, who was sent by the



senate of Carthage, (about the time of Darius Nothus, or four hundred years before Christ,) to discover the western shores and ports of Europe. That general, according to Festus Avienus, accomplished his voyage with success, and wrote a journal of it.

In that journal, which Festus professes himself to have seen, the British islands, or rather the Cassiterides, (the islands of Scilly, and the west of Cornwall,) are mentioned by the name of Oestrymnides. We are disposed to think, that the tin of Britain was known and traded in at a period far more remote; and that the Phœnician merchants made themselves acquainted with our coasts, in order to obtain it, in the early ages of the world. In the times of Ezekiel, the merchants of Tyre traded in tin and other commodities, which they fetched from Tarshish, or Tartessus, the ancient Cadiz.\* See Ezek. xxvii. 12.

Pliny says, that tin was first found in Britain, and exported from thence, by Midacritus, or Melcarthus, the Tyrian Hercules. The voyage of this adventurer Mr. Whitaker makes to be a little previous to the age of Herodotus; but on what ground the ingenious antiquary founds his conjecture we cannot ascertain.

Dr. Borlase has treated this subject very ably: he observes—"The conquests of the Phœnician Hercules in the western parts of Africa, where he is said to have vanquished Antæus, happened three hundred years before the Argonautic expedition, and this was a whole generation before the Trojan war; so that the Phœnicians, according to Bochart, must have been very conversant in the west of Africa before Joshua's time. That they came as far west as *Tingis*, now *Tangier*, at the Straits, leading into the Mediterranean sea, about the time of Joshua,

\* Dr. Parkhurst was of opinion that by Tarshish was meant Tartessus, in Spain. The ships of Solomon and Hiram probably traded to that coast; and to that Tarshish it was that Jonah went.

appears likely ; at least, if there were really two pillars with this Phœnician inscription, ' We are those who fled from the face of Joshua, the son of Naue.' " Eusebius writes to the same purpose, that some Canaanites fled from the children of Israel, and inhabited Tripoli : however that be, the doctor proceeds to state, " That it is most likely, by the temple erected at Tartessus, on the European side of the Straits, to the Tyrian Hercules, and to the general tradition in all countries of his pillars being set up near the same place, that the Phœnicians came so far west, in the most early ages of the world. Having penetrated thus far so early, we are well assured, by the many colonies they planted so soon after each other, at New and Old Carthage, (which was built fifty years before the taking of Troy, as Appian says,) at Tangier and Malaga, at Gades, and other places, that it was not the custom of this nation to stand still ; they were always for making new settlements, new plantations."

The doctor supposes further, that, in consequence of the voyage made by some Phœnicians, at the command of Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, when those voyagers passed the Straits, the Phœnicians then, if not before, became acquainted with the Atlantic Ocean, and discovered the British islands. But as they were so well acquainted with the Straits' mouth for ages long before this, it is not likely that such enterprizing sailors should content themselves, before this time, without proceeding in search of a country from whence they had indirectly received such valuable-articles of commerce : but we may perhaps venture to affirm, what is by no means improbable, that it was in consequence either of a voyage of discovery, or of some accident, that brought these adventurers acquainted with Britain, that our British tin was first exported as an article of trade.

Sir Christopher Hawkins, in his ingenious dissertation

on the tin trade of the ancients, has very plausibly argued that the tin of Britain was known in different parts of the world; and that, in particular, it was carried to the East in the very early ages of the postdiluvian world. Tin is mentioned by Moses in the Book of Numbers, chap. xxxi. 22.; and it is argued that the mirrors of the Israelitish women must have had a mixture of tin in their composition. Tin was not discovered, that we know of, at so early an age in any part of the East; and it is in Britain and Spain that we read of the first tin-mines among the ancients; but it was in Britain alone that it was found in any large quantities.

The following extracts, from Sir Christopher's work, is much to our purpose:—

“ The Rev. Dr. Vincent, in his learned treatise on the Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients in the Indian ocean, says, ‘ That tin is mentioned as an import into Africa, Arabia, Scindi, and the coast of Malabar. It has continued an article of commerce brought out of Britain in all ages; conveyed to all the countries in the Mediterranean by the Phœnicians, Greeks, and Romans, and carried into the eastern ocean from the origin of commerce.’

“ We are also informed, by the same respectable author, that ‘ Tin is another of the articles enumerated by Arrian, (which were exported to India;) and if we find the produce of Britain conveyed to Malabar in the earliest period that history can reach, we find the spices of Malabar in Britain in an age when the course of the commerce with India was probably as little known as the existence of America: the venerable Bede, who died in the year 735, was possessed of pepper, cinnamon, and frankincense. Did no one ever ask the question how, in that age, these luxuries had been conveyed to Britain, or were treasured in a cell at Wearmouth?’ ”

Mention is made in Scripture of the ships of Tarshish; and this place was no other, in all probability, than Cadiz, the ancient Gadir, called also Tartessus.

The Phœnicians traded to all parts of the known world: to the British isles, commonly understood to be the Cassiterides; to Spain, and to other places on the ocean; both to the north and south of the Straits of Gibraltar. In all these they had ships, colonies, and commerce, by means of which they procured what was either useful to themselves, or might be so to others.

Dupin, in his Universal Library of History, observes, on the authority of Sanconiathon, the most ancient and celebrated of the Phœnician historians, that Hercules, the tutelary god of Tyre was worshipped under the name of Melcarthus. The authors of the Universal History likewise mention, that Hercules, or Melcarthus, was the ancient god of Tyre; and they add, that he was so called from Melec Cartha, the king of the city. He was called the Tyrian Hercules, and was worshipped as such at the ancient temple of Cadiz.

Sanconiathon lived about the time of David: and the voyage of Melcarthus, to whom these discoveries and inventions were attributed, or rather perhaps under whose influence they were made, must have taken place before that period.

The date of this transaction seems to be confirmed by a passage in Strabo, who says, that Phœnician ships crossed the Straits, and entered the ocean, about twelve hundred years before Christ.

We know that Homer was acquainted with the use of tin; and it is particularly noticed by him in his description of the shield of Achilles. It is supposed to have been made use of to temper, and give polish to copper; of which metal the armour, and various utensils of the ancients, were formed, before iron was become generally

used. Mr. Klaproth and others, in analyzing some copper swords, and various ancient articles, found them to yield a certain proportion of tin ; which he therefore infers to have been in use among the most ancient nations as an alloy to their copper ; without which it could not have served the various purposes to which it was applied.

The famous Tyrian purple, it is supposed with great reason, owed its unfading lustre to the use of British tin, which is employed as an essential ingredient in the new scarlet dye of our fine cloths ; these owe the permanency of their delicate colours to the retentiveness given by the finest grain tin, dissolved in aqua fortis.

I cannot refrain laying before the Reader the following conclusions of the ingenious author just alluded to : “ It appears that the Phœnicians, in the time of Abraham, employed trading vessels in the Mediterranean sea, and that these vessels very early extended their voyages to Tarshish, and procured from thence the precious metals. Melcarthus, the Phœnician, is reported to have first brought tin from Britain ; but it remains uncertain whether this was the name of the real discoverer of Britain, or of the deity worshipped by the Phœnician colony at Cadiz : all we know is, that the name of Melcarthus, or Midacritus, is mentioned one thousand years before the Christian æra ; and that when Herodotus wrote, the Phœnicians had extended their voyages to the remotest coasts of Europe.

“ The Phœnicians, it is certain, enriched themselves by exchanging their manufactures, and the productions of the East, for the silver of Spain, and the tin of Britain. Spain was, to them, what America has been to us ; and Britain was so invaluable to their trade that they uniformly endeavoured to throw a veil of mystery over its situation and its produce.

“ It has been much doubted, whether the Phœnicians formed any commercial establishment or colony in Britain; but when it is considered, that they planted colonies at every station they visited in the Mediterranean, and by means of those colonies, extended their commerce; and, as we know from the authority of Strabo, that they possessed three hundred such colonies round the coasts of the Mediterranean; it does not appear unreasonable to infer, that they established similar settlements in more distant countries, and particularly in Britain; where, for such a length of time, they possessed the monopoly of an article which enriched them, and was so much required by other nations.”

There is, therefore, great reason to infer, from all these premisses, that the same people who planted colonies in Spain and other countries, formed a trading colony in the western part of Britain; and we shall find, in prosecuting the religious history of our ancestors, that their mythology and superstitious practices were considerably indebted to the Phœnicians, and this could hardly have taken place unless some of those people had resided among them; although, perhaps, never in any considerable numbers.

*Manners and Customs of the Ancient Britons.*

VIII. THE obscure accounts delivered down to us, and contained either in the Greek and Roman writers, or in national tradition, respecting the domestic and civil manners of our British ancestors, afford us but slender materials to enable us to arrive at any satisfactory conclusions on the subject of our inquiry. Among the various tribes which occupied our island in the remote æra under consideration, some were more and others less civilized; but, when compared with polished nations, their state of society was rude and uncultivated, and some of them little better than Barbarians. If we come at once to a conclusion, grounded on the testimonies of foreign writers, we shall be ready to give up the point without hesitation, and deny the Britons to be in any better than a savage state. Such, indeed, was their condition, if all ancient nations, who were unacquainted with the various arts of modern conveniency and politeness, must be regarded as savages.

Cæsar's account of Britain, and its inhabitants, is concise but interesting. The interior of the country, and the western coasts, he was a stranger to, as he acknowledges. The interior parts of Britain, he considered as inhabited by the original occupiers of the country; the sea-coast, (that is the south-eastern,) by those who, either for the sake of plunder, or from hostile intentions, crossed over from the territories of the Belgæ. The number of inhabitants he makes to be prodigious, and their buildings exceedingly numerous, resembling those of Gaul. Their herds of cattle were numerous and large, as they subsisted chiefly on them or their milk, more than on corn, of which they sowed but little. Their

traffic in tin was famous ; but they were little acquainted with the vast stores of iron and copper, for which certain parts of the island are become so famous. They used iron rings for money ; and of that metal they forged various implements of a rude kind, for the purposes of war and husbandry. Ossian affords us the best description of the old British and Irish warriors ; as to their preparations for the battle, the nature of their conflicts, and the use they made of their victories.

Cæsar describes the people of Kent as the most civilized of all the Britons within his knowledge. From his own information, he inferred that the inland inhabitants, in general, sowed no grain, but lived on milk and flesh, and were clothed with skins. But it appears improbable that the Dobuni and the Silures, on the banks of the Severn and the Wye, were utterly unacquainted with the arts of agriculture.

Strangers to luxury, and even to what are now deemed the necessities of life, their wealth consisted in their cattle. These, in the summer, ranged over the hills, or the open downs ; and in the winter were brought to situations where they could be housed and sheltered from the cold and the storm, and be convenient for the use of their families when they chose to slaughter them. Their diet was generally simple and parsimonious ; chiefly milk, butter, and cheese, and perhaps oatmeal ; which they were acquainted with, probably, before wheat was introduced among them. At their feasts they indulged themselves with animal food, with cerevisia, or malt-liquor, with cyder and metheglin. They seldom had fixed meals, but ate more or less frequently, according to their convenience ; and when they became rather more polished, two meals a day formed their seasons of repast.

When Cæsar met the Britons in battle, their appearance was fierce, and their courage undaunted. In order



to strike terror into their enemies, they painted, or rather tattooed, their bodies; which, when their *hÿg*, or plaid, was thrown off, they presented naked to the assault of their invaders. The painting of their bodies with woad, with the marks which they inscribed on their skin, arose partly from superstition, and was partly adopted as a defence against the weather, as well as designed to terrify their enemies.

Dion Cassius relates a circumstance in the manners of the Britons which serves as an instance of their hardihood: when pursued by an enemy too powerful, they betook themselves to boggy places, where they were able to endure all the inconvenience of such a miserable situation for whole days and nights, without any other sustenance than a morsel of something no bigger than a bean, which the historian affirms was sufficient to stay their hunger.

“The Britons,” says Mr. Whitaker, “depended principally for food on their herds of kine, sheep, goats, and hogs.” The same author, who is willing to set forth our ancestors to the best advantage, mentions various wild and domestic birds as known to the Britons; such as the duck, teal, widgeon, swan, crane, stork, cock of the wood, and the quail. The goose and the hare were prohibited by the Druids; and if the Britons of the south were like those of the north, they made no use of fish: but one might suppose that no superstition could restrain them from making use of the salmon, and other fine fish of the Severn and the Wye, and our other noble rivers. The Romans introduced among them the pheasant, the peacock, the partridge, the plover, the pigeon, and the rabbit.

Their hills were covered with deer, so that their venison feasts were frequent, rewarding them for the toil of hunting; for with them it was more of a laborious and

necessary exercise than an amusement. As the country was infested with wolves and bears, their agility and courage were frequently called forth in more ferocious pursuits.

King Edgar contrived a method of ridding this island of the whole race of wolves, by imposing a tribute of wolves' heads on the Welsh princes :\* but by what means the country was divested of its bears we have no accounts ; it is probable they never were numerous.

Ossian describes the cookery of the rude inhabitants of Caledonia ; and our Britons perhaps used a similar method : they laid their venison on a bed of flaming fern, and then covered it with flat stones and fresh fern.— Their beverage was milk and water, and at their festivals metheglin and ale, in the preparation of which they excelled.

The Romans introduced every luxury among the Britons, and filled the land with plenty, by teaching them to turn to the best advantage the native riches of their excellent country.

Perhaps we cannot form a better idea of the mode of living among our British ancestors, even after their state of civilization during the Roman period, than from the description which Geraldus Cambrensis gives of the people of South Wales in the twelfth century. The Cambro-Britons cannot be supposed to make any great progress in civilization from the departure of the Romans to their coalition with England, under Edward III. As to their habitations, it appears from Cæsar, that the Belgic Britons had commodious houses ; but in what manner the midland and Western Britons constructed theirs, we can

\* From that condition of peace and alliance, so politic and humane, the inference is obvious, that the mountains and forests of Wales were more infested with those ravenous animals than other parts of the island.

only conjecture.\* The description given of the royal seat of Cassivelaunus, in Hertfordshire, will not permit us to think they were much versed in the art of building. It is probable they had no lofts, and it was only in the chieftain's house that there was more than one apartment. When we consider what kind of huts the common people still occupy, in various parts of Britain and Ireland, we may well conceive that a warlike people, who spent most of their time in the chase, or in tending their cattle, and had so little of the skill of the wright and artist, scarcely knew the comforts of a warm habitation.

Their towns were a number of huts, with one rather of the superior kind for their chief. Their fortresses were defended by nature more than by art ; but we have still the traces of their encampments, which antiquaries undertake to distinguish from those of the Romans. Some of our great towns are upon the site of those built by the old Britons, if tradition may be credited.

Their garments were woollen, worked up in a coarse way ; and that which was their covering by night served also to defend the body from wet and cold during the day. Their chiefs may be supposed to have had some kind of ornamental clothing ; and the most distinguished of them wore a gold torch, or massy chain, appended to a collar. All the principal men were decorated in that sumptuous manner ; and from the old bard of Ottadina we learn that the heroes who fell at the battle of Cattraeth were all thus arrayed.

The Roman historian describes Queen Boadicea as adorned with such a princely ornament ; while her yellow hair fell down her back over her long flowing robe.

\* In the History of Manchester, book i. cap. 1. sec. 3. the ingenious author supposes their cabins, or houses, to be built of wood, on foundations of stone, and roofed with a sloping covering of skins or reeds. The use of lime they were not acquainted with.

Mr. Whitaker has strove, with great ingenuity, and in his own glowing style, to depict our ancestors in respectable colours ; but, after all, we must admit that they were rude and uncultivated, unless the love of our country should lead us, perhaps unconsciously, to overstep the bounds of truth. The Romanized Britons of the fifth century trembled at the approach of the Caledonian Britons, whom they considered as absolute savages, while they themselves neither possessed the skill and warlike manœuvres of the Romans, nor the fierce courage of their forefathers, until necessity roused them, and habit taught them, once more the use of arms.

The habits of the ancient Britons unfitted them for domestic comforts, and the peaceful and laborious occupations of agriculture. Their mode of life was so erratic, and exposed to constant warfare, their skill in the mechanic arts so rude, and their temper so indolent, that they were indisposed, as well as unqualified, for rural employment. They were not possessed of the patience, attention and perseverance, requisite for a successful cultivation of the ground, and forming its produce into food.

The laws of Prince Howel may be supposed to regard a state of society, which had very anciently prevailed among the Britons ; and from the nature of that code we may form some judgment of the state of their affairs. This we shall presently notice in a more particular manner.

As to the moral condition of our islanders, we may naturally infer that it was not materially better, nor perhaps much worse, than that of their neighbours on the continent ; and what we read in the Sacred Scriptures respecting the idolatrous nations of Canaan, may afford us too just a portraiture of our heathen ancestors. They delighted in war and the chase ; their skirmishes were

frequent among themselves, as the more powerful states were incessantly encroaching upon the lesser and the feebler. Cæsar's grand pretext for invading Britain the second time, was grounded on the encroachment made by Cassivelaunus, prince of the Catti, and some other tribes on the neighbouring territory of the Trinobantes, whose prince, Immanuentius, had been slain by that aspiring chieftain.

These domestic discords, as they were fatal to the Britons in a political point of view, so they served to foment every evil and diabolical disposition of mind, and initiated them into every species of fraud and treachery, rendering them fierce, cruel and implacable. Their notions of private property were very imperfect, and the latitude of their tenures was a cause of continual disorder and tumult, which gave vast influence and authority to their supreme magistrates, the Druids. At last, cruelty and riot were so intimately blended with their superstitions, they were degraded to the lowest state of human nature, and given up to the foulest vices, and the most flagitious crimes. One thing which Cæsar affirms of them gives an awful confirmation of this statement: "Ten or twelve are said to have their wives in common; particularly brothers with brothers, and parents with their children. The children who were the fruit of such unlawful embraces, were considered as pertaining to those men who married the mothers when virgins." Cæsar was an acute observer of human nature, and we have no reason to call his accuracy in question as to the above particulars.\*

\* Their rude manner of living, may have given occasion for extending this charge beyond what truth would warrant. Geraldus Cambrensis gives us a curious account of the dormitories of the Welsh in the twelfth century; and something similar to it still exists in Wales, in Scotland, and some parts of England. It is lamentable, that our peasantry should be placed in circumstances inconsistent with

But there were transactions equally indecorous among other ancient nations ; for, among the Persians, incest was publicly tolerated, although, in many heathen nations, it was held in detestation, and furnished Euripides with matter for his sublime tragedy of *Œdipus*. Very similar to what the Roman dictator lays to the charge of the Britons, is affirmed of the Massagetz, by Herodotus ; for, among that people, though one man married only one wife, he enjoyed her only in common with others.

The state of public morals was exceedingly corrupt and abominable, even among the refined Greeks and Romans ; and St. Paul, a good judge of human nature, draws a horrid picture of the vices of the heathen world in general. Prostitution, and even unnatural crimes, were sanctioned, as pertaining to the solemnities of their worship, so that they literally “ went a whoring ” after their gods. Heathen nations continue to be in a state equally bad : the worshippers of Juggernaut afford us a specimen of what the worshippers of Venus, Bacchus, Astaroth, Baalphegor, and Hesus, once were.

As to the proficiency of the Britons in the mechanical arts it could be but imperfect. The minerals with which the island abounded, they understood but little how to use. It appears from Cæsar that they imported brass ; that they had opened none of their copper-mines ; or, at least, that they knew not how to make brass by the admixture of calamine. They made use of their tin, as we may conceive, in some rude sort of vessels and implements ; and as to iron, we find they had iron rings for money, at least among the Belgæ : but their skill appears to have been tried with the greatest effect in the structure of their war-chariots, to which they

delicacy. But if rude familiarity be an inlet to temptation, the luxuries and amusements of the great tend still more intimately to depravity of morals.

fastened those horrid hooks and scythes ; and from thence we learn, that, in some rude way, they understood the art of forging iron into various implements. Being acquainted with the use of iron, they were under no necessity of continuing destitute of any of the essential conveniencies of life.

War was with them a trade ; and we know that they were acquainted with the use of weapons of destruction, when we know not, whether they understood how to plough the ground. What confirms this suspicion is the account of the Triads, that the method of cultivating the ground by means of the plough, was first introduced among the native Britons by St. Iltutus, in the fifth century. Even as late as the twelfth century, the Cambro-Britons were ready, at the shortest notice, to leave the plough-share in the ground, and forsake their fields with alacrity, when the sound of war called them to follow their chiefs to battle.

That they were capable of constructing edifices that called forth the exertion of herculean strength, we have a famous specimen, in that admired remains of the Druid temple on Salisbury plain ; while, at the same time, we may conceive, from the rudeness of the structure, how unapt they were for devising any thing which could display neatness of design or execution, or serve the purposes of private conveniency and comfort.

Living in an island, the Britons, in the most remote period of their history, appear fond of the watery element ; but their vessels were only fit for their navigable rivers, and not such in which they could venture out to sea.

The valuable commodity of their tin, they knew not themselves how to convey to the continent ; but the Phœnicians, to whom Britain was as valuable as America has proved to the nations of Europe, came to their ports and shipped

off that highly prized mineral, to convey it over the world. Such, in the days of old, were the rude forefathers of the lords of the ocean.

There are certain accounts in the British Triads, relative to the state of our ancestors, worthy of attention. In one place we have the following statement: "The chief mechanics of Britain were, Corvinôr, the bard of Ceri Hir Lyngwyn, who first made a ship, sail, and helm, for the Cymry; Morddal Gwr Gweilgi, mason to Ceiraint ap Greidiawl, who first taught the Britons to work with stone and mortar, about the time that the *Emperor Alexander* was subduing the world; Coel, son of Cyllin, and grandson of Caradoc, the son of Brân, (or Caractacus,) who first made a mill turned by a wheel: these three were bards."—Triad, 91.

From this it would appear, that the Druid bards rendered themselves useful to the community, by cultivating science and promoting the mechanic arts, as some of the Popish monks afterwards did. Whatever, in this sort, they introduced among the Britons, became subservient to their own purpose, by exciting the admiration of an ignorant populace, and passing for the inventions of men highly favoured of heaven.

That the Britons had any acquaintance with masonry, as far back as the time of Alexander the Great, cannot so easily meet with our assent; but, from the antiquity of Stonehenge, we find they were not unacquainted with the art of erecting stone buildings. The abundance of materials, in certain parts of the island, would suggest the convenience and durability of edifices of that nature; but, from all the observations made on the remains of old buildings, purely British, it does not appear that they knew the use of lime before the coming over of the Romans.

Although we have seen that the early Britons were not



much addicted to agriculture, yet, from a reference which we have in the Triads, it appears that the Cymry were accustomed to some rude efforts of that kind; and we have an account of some improvements introduced from the continent, by one who made himself eminent for his religious services, still more so than for his communications of a mechanical kind. It is stated that St. Illutus, from Bretany, made the Cymry acquainted with the proper method of ploughing the land; whereas, hitherto, they were only acquainted with the use of the spade and the mattock, as implements of tillage, according to the usage of the first inhabitants.\*

One of the Triads speaks of barley and wheat as introduced by foreigners; and first of all successfully cultivated, the former in Pembrokeshire, and the latter in Monmouthshire. Rye, at the same time, was introduced into Carnarvonshire. These were not, therefore, early known in the country; but, as the account is mixed with mythology, there is no knowing to what period of history it refers.

We have in the Triads the following notice, which shews that astronomy was held in repute among the Britons: "The three celebrated astronomers of the Isle of Britain, *Idris* the chieftain, and *Gwydion* the son of *Don*, and *Gwyn* the son of *Nudd*; and so great was their knowledge of the stars, and their influences, that they could prognosticate whatever it was desirable to know." By this it appears, that astrology was regarded as the highest attainment of the British astronomer. But the characters mentioned are mythological, the first being the Atlas of the Britons, or a personification of the starry heavens; the second being Mercury, or the milky way;

\* The *Gwyddelod* commonly denotes the Irish; but the word properly signifies the Aborigines, or primitive inhabitants of a country.

and the other being the genius of the seasons, or the king of the fairies, a family who have long since taken leave of the regions of Cambria.

The great Roman roads in Britain have been highly celebrated among antiquaries ; but some merit is due to our ancestors, who possessed not the advantages of the enlightened Romans for carrying on undertakings of that nature.

The existence of these old British roads, which extended from sea to sea, is not only attested in our ancient history, but the traces of them are still to be pointed out, according to some respectable writers. Mr. Whitaker has displayed his usual ingenuity, in the illustration of this branch of our national antiquities. The two great roads, called the Watling-street, and the Ikening-street, were only new, modelled by the Romans ; being originally constructed by the Britons, in order to facilitate the intercourse between the different tribes, to collect their forces at certain central points, and to open the communication with the coast. What were the particular circumstances, that first led to undertakings of this nature, can not be ascertained ; but they argue a greatness of mind in the design, and a perseverance in the execution, far beyond what has been commonly ascribed to the primitive inhabitants of Britain.

The two roads alluded to, were denominated from the people to whom they led ; the *Ikening-street* being the way that led to the *Ikeni*, (or *Iceni*,) or people of Norfolk, on the eastern coast ; the other, the *Watling*, or *Guetheling* street, (*Via Vitilingia*,) denoting that which led to the *Guetheli*, or *Gatheli*, of Ireland. The appellation of each of these roads points to a British origin. These, with other smaller ones, are, by Mr. Whitaker, ascribed to the Belgæ ; but our chronicle ascribes them to *Dunwal Moelmud*.

If these roads had not been laid out by the Britons, they would, in all probability, have been distinguished by names purely Roman: the name of *Guetheling*, could not have been given by the Romans to the one, as the inhabitants of Ireland were not known to the Romans by that name; but this road was called by the Britons *Sarn Guethelin*, or the way of the Irish; and so the Ikening-street was called *Sarn Ikenin*, or the way of the Ikeni. All the roads first laid out by the Romans, received Roman names.

These roads were rude and simple, and not to be compared in beauty or durability to those laid out by the Romans; but they must have been of great service to the natives; and by means of them, their commerce seems to have been extended, says Whitaker, much farther into the island than the highest ideas of our historians concerning its interior condition would allow us to apprehend. They seem to have been carried from the south-west into Suffolk, on one side; and from the south-east into Caernarvonshire on the other.

The names of the British ways, of which seven are specified, were:—

1. The Watling-street, or Irish road.
2. The Iknield-street, or road of the Iceni.
3. The Ryknield-street, through the country of the Coritani, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, &c.
4. The Ermyn-street, from Sussex to Scotland.
5. The Akeman-street, or intermediate road.
6. The Upper Salt Way, from Droitwich into Lincolnshire.
7. The Lower Salt Way, from the same to the south-east.

This subject has been ably investigated by the author of the commentary on the itinerary of Richard. It is observed, “ We need not be surprised if, after the lapse of so many ages, marks of such British roads appear even

at present, to a careful observer, differing in many respects from the roads subsequently made by the Romans, and traversing the island in every direction.

“ These ancient ways may be distinguished from those made by the Romans, by unequivocal marks.

“ I. They are not raised nor paved, nor always straight, but often wind along the tops or sides of the chains of hills which lie in their course.

“ II. They do not lead to Roman towns, or notice such towns, except when placed on the sites of British fortresses.

“ III. They are attended by tumuli, like those of the Romans, but usually throw out branches, which, after running parallel for some miles, are re-united to the original stem.”

The distinguishing difference between the original British trackways, and the Roman roads, are instanced in the Foss and the Iknield street ; the latter, during the greater part of its course, keeping along the chain of hills which lay in its way, not leading decidedly to Roman towns, throwing out parallel branches, attended always with tumuli, still bearing the British name, and appearing, from its direction, to have been made rather for commercial than military purposes.

On the other hand, the adopted roads, but more especially those made by the Romans themselves, are distinguished by peculiar marks. Posts or towns are placed on them at nearly regular distances, seldom exceeding twenty miles, the length of a single march ; and also at the point where two roads intersect each other, or where several roads diverge. These roads are raised with surprising labour to the height of ten feet, and sometimes even more, instances of which are to be seen on the heath near Woodyates Inn, in Dorsetshire, near old Sarum ; on the side of Ford, in Chute Park, Wilts ; between Ancaster

and Lincoln; and still more remarkably on Bramham Moor, near Tadcaster, in Yorkshire. They were formed of materials often brought from a considerable distance, such as chalk, pebbles, or gravel; and the most considerable are paved with stones, which are visible to this day. Tumuli also, which seem to be the direction posts of antiquity, attended their course, and occur in almost every instance where a road descends a hill, approaches a station, or throws off a branch. Another peculiarity of the Roman ways is their straight direction, from which they seldom deviate, except to avoid a rapid ascent or descent, to throw off another road, or to approach a station, which, from the circumstances before-mentioned, had been fixed out of the general line. Of this there is a curious instance, where the Foss, in approaching Cirencester from the North, meets the Ake-man-street.

The itinerary of Antonine has been usually considered as the best directory for the Roman-British roads, specifying the towns and stations on each road, and shewing the distances between them. But the Itinerary discovered by Richard, a monk of Cirencester, and which was once more made known to the world by Dr. Stukely, from a copy found by Bertram at Copenhagen, is far more accurate and complete. From a new edition of Richard, accompanied with a commentary and notes, published by White 1809, I have borrowed the extracts now laid before the reader.

*The Civil Government and Laws of the ancient Britons.*

THEIR constitution appears similar to that of many other countries in ancient times; they had a variety of civitates, or states, which were independent of each other, until some of the more potent oppressed the feebler, and brought them in subjection. Each state had its own lord or petty sovereign, who, with the advice of the elders or heads of the chief families, governed his own people. But all who were of the race of Cymry owed fealty and homage to one supreme head: thus Roderick the Great was considered as sovereign of all Wales, but he distributed his dominions among his three sons; yet even then it was considered that one had supreme authority over the other two. In the tenth century, prince Howel, who reigned in South Wales, stiled himself king of all Wales.

According to the tradition of the Triads, the nation of the Cymry claimed the supreme monarchy of the Isle of Britain: but of this prerogative they are said to have been deprived by the Loegrians, or the people of the central region, now called England. When King Edgar demanded the allegiance of the Welsh princes, he urged his claim on the ground of ancient usage, that the whole island should be subject to the crown of London. Edward the first urged a similar claim, and established it.

In a time of common danger the chieftains, who were the reguli or lords of distinct territories, formed a confederacy, and elected some eminent chieftain of an illustrious family to be their Pendragon, or Stadtholder, to lead them to battle. Such were Cassivelaunus, Caractacus, Vortigern, and Arthur. The first of these was at the head of certain confederate tribes of the Britons of

Essex, Kent, Surry, Middlesex, and Hertfordshire ; but it does not appear that any of the Britons, from the more distant parts of the island, came to their aid.\* Caractacus's command was over the Silures and Ordovices ; Vortigern and Arthur claimed a more extensive sovereignty, as kings of Britain.

An ingenious writer affirms, that the princes of the central Britons, or those of Loegyr, did in all probability enjoy the honours of sovereignty so generally, that they often succeeded with only the forms, and sometimes without the forms, of election. But, according to the Triads, the Cymry claimed the precedency of all other tribes ; and it was their princes that made the most valiant stand against the Saxons.

As the Romans only wished to claim the supreme dominion, they permitted the various British chiefs to continue to enjoy their titular honours, with a limited exercise of their former authority. This was a lenient and wise policy ; and, in order further to secure the submission of those princes, and for the facility of establishing a military despotism, they suffered them to succeed by inheritance.

Thus, when the Romans abdicated the island, the Britons returned to their ancient forms of government : and we are informed by an imperial historian, that the Emperor Honorius, seeing the empire attacked on all sides by the barbarians, sent to the states of Britain to maintain their freedom, and to stand in their own defence against the barbarians.—See *Gibbon's Decline and Fall*.

Our Triads make mention of national institutes and laws as in existence in this island for ages previous to the Christian æra ; and the names of princes are given

\* The Dobuni being rather in subjection to the Cassii, may have joined ; and it is not improbable that Caractacus, the Silurian chief, joined the Dobuni.

who freed the country from the horrors of anarchy, and taught the Britons the necessity of wise and just regulations, and acknowledged principles of equity and right. Those laws were always enacted by the general suffrage of what were afterwards called *uchelwyr*, or noblemen; and the *gwyr da*, men of small estate, or such as we would call freeholders; the common people, or the plebeians, being in a state of villenage, or slavery, to the great men. It is probable that the general principles, and many of the particular usages, established by the laws of Prince Howel the Good, were derived from those old national institutes.

The Isle of Britain is distinguished into three grand territories, CYMRIA, LOEGYR, and ALBAN; and to each of these pertained the honours of monarchy. "There is one supreme authority, in union with the arbitration or voice of the country and community, agreeable to the distribution of Prydain, the son of Aedd the Great; and to the nation of the Cymry does the supreme authority pertain, according to the voice of the country and the nation, because of natural right and equity; and subject to this constitution ought the sovereignty to be regulated in every territory of Britain; and every sovereignty is subject to the voice of the country: on that ground is the proverb founded, 'The country is greater than its lord.' " Such is the language of our ancient documents on the subject of government; the language of civil liberty.

Another Triad is as follows: "The three pillars of the common-weal of the Isle of Britain; the voice (or decision) of the country, the sovereignty, and the law, according to the distribution of Prydain, the son of Aedd the Great."

There are three characters mentioned as men of the first consequence among the primordial Britons: the first is *Hu*, or *Heus* the mighty, who first conducted the



Cymry to Britain; the second is *Prydain*, the son of *Aedd the Great*, who first established a regular government in this island; for, before then, there were no fixed principles of equity, (that is, every one did what seemed good in his own eyes,) and no law but that of force: the third was *Dywnwal Moelmud*; and he was the first who made a proper distribution of laws, institutes, and customs, national and territorial rights.

In another Triad, three supreme rulers, or persons invested with monarchy by the general suffrage, are mentioned: the first is *Prydain*; the second is the celebrated *Coraetacus*; and the third is *Owen*, the son of the usurper Maximus; when the *Cymry* had their rights of sovereign power restored to them in consequence of the abdication of the Romans. These persons are styled monarchs, chosen by general suffrage, because they were exalted to their dignity by the states of the whole country; through all the territories of the nation of the *Cymry*, in all the lordships, commots, and hundreds of the Isle of Britain, and its appended islets.

Thus we find that *Prydain*, or Brito, was the first legislator of the Britons; and the *Cymry*, or first settlers, considered all the succeeding colonies bound, by right and compact, to acknowledge their supreme authority. *Prydain* formed the roving tribes into a regular community. *Dywnwal* made further improvements in legislation, and settled the constitution of government and the grand principles of jurisprudence; he fixed the bounds of the various divisions and subdivisions of the country, and adjusted the rights and claims of the various classes in the community.

From hence we see the tradition of the Welsh, respecting the origin of those laws, and civil regulations, which, in subsequent times, were again collected together, analyzed, and enforced, by the authority of Prince Howell,

and the estates of the principality of Wales. Previously to that time, King Alfred established a code of laws for the English nation.

Mr. Roberts, in his ingenious work on the History of the early Britons, comments on the account we have in the British Chronicle, respecting Dunwal Moelmud :

“ Coming to the throne when the kingdom was a prey to intestine divisions, his martial spirit, and the superiority of his genius, was soon distinguished by successive victories over five opponents. Internal tranquillity being at length restored, and his sovereignty confirmed, with the spirit that animates great minds, he became a law-giver to his people, and provided for the public safety and tranquillity. Temples were built, roads made, and such restraints put upon dishonesty, that the property and person of the traveller are said to have been perfectly secure during the greater part of a long reign.

“ Under wholesome laws wealth would increase, and industry flourish ; and, that they did so, may be collected from this circumstance—that he is said to have made himself a crown of gold, and to have been the first monarch in Britain that wore one. To this sovereign must be ascribed the division of the kingdom into cantreds and commots ; as ‘ he drew up in regular form, laws, ordinances, duties, and privileges, of district and family.’ ”  
Triad 4.

His laws, extant in the time of Gildas, (that is, Gildas Nennius,) were translated by him into Latin ; as were also those of Marcia, the wife of Cyhylin, the third from Dyvnwal. That translation was communicated to Alfred the Great, by *Aser*, (or *Aserius*,) a learned monk of St. David's, afterwards made bishop of Sherburne. Alfred translated these laws from Gildas's Latin into Saxon, and called the code “ The Merchenlage.” Mr. Roberts refers to Gale's Roman History, line i. pag. 202. ; and

adds, that in this the Saxon, as well as the Welsh historians, agree.

This heroic sovereign of the Britons, who deserved to be enrolled among the demi-gods of antiquity, beyond many who received that honour, reigned forty years ; and, according to the Chronicle, was buried in London : which is, by way of anticipation, considered as the capital even in those remote ages.

Those territorial princes, who, for ages previous to the Roman period, are in the Chronicle styled kings of Britain, must be regarded either as sovereigns of the more powerful states, and in general of the race of the Cymry ; or else such as were elected, upon particular emergencies, to exercise supreme power ; and to whom the other princes submitted themselves, according to a constitution something similar to that of the Germanic body.

The primordial Britons claimed fealty from the colonies who came and settled after them in the island ; or, at least, it was afterwards affirmed that they only settled by leave of the first colonists. But those who thus settled by permission, soon found themselves able to claim independence. This was exemplified in the Coritani, then in the Belgæ ; and afterwards in the Saxons. This happened in consequence of that ancient custom of the Cambro-Britons, that they would not suffer any strangers to be incorporated among them, or considered as natives, until the ninth generation. Hereby they lost that supreme authority in the island ; their claim to which they have boasted of, even in more recent times.

Among the mistakes in our ancient history, we may conceive it happened that sovereigns of districts, who were contemporary, are in some instances set down as succeeding each other. Those princes of particular territories succeeded by inheritance to the honours of their ancestors, by primogeniture, as the law of Gavel Kind,

which was a very ancient tenure among the Britons, did not extend to the sovereign.

Many of our fundamental principles of common law may be traced to the usages of the Ancient Britons. Their princes convened their principal chieftains, and heads of families, when any public measures were to be adopted or enforced; and in those assemblies we perceive the rudiments of our parliaments. When the Romans left the island, the principal men among the Britons united in a convention, to consult on the state of public affairs, and to elect generals to head their forces, to withstand the ravages of the barbarians, as the Picts and Scots were called. Vortigern and Arthur were elected by the confederated chiefs of the country, to oppose the Saxons.

The laws of Prince Howel, in the tenth century, refer to certain general principles of law recognized in more remote ages. The estates of the country, and the principal clergy, were called together; and out of them certain persons were selected for the purpose of drawing up a code of laws, founded upon the law of the land and ancient usage. These refer to the regulation of the royal household, the claims of the king, the distinctions of rank, the courts of law and the modes of proceeding in them, and the general police of the country. Certain baronial and manorial courts are acknowledged; but in matters of inheritance, and disputes respecting territory, the verdict of the king's court must be resorted to. The prince is acknowledged as the supreme head, but not possessing any authority over particular lordships. The common people, as Cæsar says respecting the Gauls, were but *in servorum loco*; and the fine for killing a slave was, according to his value, like an ox or a sheep.

Murder was generally punished by a fine, which amounted to a fixed sum of money, according to the rank

of the person ; and, if this were not paid, any of the family had a right to avenge the death of their kinsman. The disgrace of any crime attached to the whole family of the person who had been guilty.

In various cases they had their juries; and these differed in number according to the occasion. In general the oaths of fifty substantial freemen were requisite to form a verdict ; but in some cases a greater number were required.

No offence was capital unless it was deemed to amount to a hundred pounds, so that their laws were lenient to an extreme.

The description of the Welsh in the twelfth century, by Geraldus Cambrensis, will enable us to form some notion how the Britons lived in ages far remote ; and in the manners of the native Irish, and the Highland Scots, we partly see what our forefathers were in the most ancient times.

Mr. Whitaker, in his ingenious performance, " The History of Manchester," has made out a very plausible hypothesis respecting the manners, laws, and customs, of our early ancestors : to that author I refer my Reader, and conclude a subject on which so little can be said with certainty, while much may be surmised by a bold and ingenious fancy.

*The Languages spoken by the Ancient Britons.*

X.—THE original of a people is best ascertained, according to some antiquaries, by their language ; especially when that language is preserved in its simple state, and bears about it the rust of antiquity, when contrasted with the polish and refinement of modern languages.

It is admitted that the language spoken by the natives of Wales is the same as was spoken in this island previous to the establishment of the Romans. It is equally true, that the language used by the natives of Ireland is the same that was spoken by the most ancient inhabitants of that island. The language of the Albanian Scots, or Highlanders, called *Erse* and *Gaelic*, is the same as the language in which Ossian sung, and Galgacus harangued his troops. We have still some remains of the language spoken in Cornwall in ancient times, and which bears a striking affinity to the Cymraeg spoken in Wales ; and is probably only a dialect of the Armoric, or the language of the Bretons of France.

It has been supposed that the Cymraeg, or Welsh, was anciently spoken by the central Britons ; but there are reasons for questioning the correctness of such an hypothesis. It was principally spoken by the inhabitants of the western coast, from Cornwall to the Firth of Clyde. The Britons of Loegyr had a different dialect ; either the same as the Cornish and Armoric, or the Gaddelic, for this last was the language of the Belgic Britons, many of whom afterwards settled in Ireland.

Ireland must have received the great germ of population from this island ; and it follows that the Irish, or Gaddelic, was once spoken in certain parts of Britain. That this language was very anciently distinct from the

Cymraeg we have reason to affirm : among the people who spoke it upon the continent it was more copious than the Welsh, but in subsequent ages the Welsh was better cultivated.

The *Gaddelic*, or *Gwyddeleg*, spoken in Ireland, and the Scotch Gaelic, are two dialects of the same tongue : which is the most pure must be left to the decision of impartial critics. " The Irish," says a learned friend, " is beyond doubt the most classical : " but, if that be allowed, it proves not but the Highland dialect may be the more ancient.

The language of Cumberland, and the south of Scotland, was the Cymraeg, as we have it still in the poems of Llywarch, a Cumbrian prince ; and the poems of Aneurin the Otadinian or Northumbrian. The language of *Merlin*, or *Myrdhin*, who was president of the northern bards, is also preserved. The chief residence of the northern Druids was on the island of *Hi*, or *Iona* ; and we have, among the fragments of Myrdhin, a short poetic dialogue between the bard and one Ys Colan, or St. Colum, the apostle of the Picts.

Taliesin gives his countrymen the name of *Pedriaiith*, or the people of four dialects. These, in all probability, were the following : the language spoken by the Bretons of Armorica ; the dialect of the Cornish and the Devonshire men ; that of the inhabitants of Wales ; and that of the Strath Clyde Welsh, from Cumberland to the Clyde. That, in the north of Scotland, the Welsh was spoken by the Gwyddel Fichti, or the Picts, is not improbable. The north-western coast of Scotland was inhabited by a people who spoke the same language as the Irish, in the time of Ossian ; but the Cymraeg was probably spoken in the Lothians, among the South Picts, and perhaps the Northern Picts ; for we have no account of what language the Picts spoke, unless it were the language of the Cymbro-Britons.

Mr. Edward Lhuyd inclined to that opinion ; and I have received a singular anecdote from Mr. Edward Williams the Bard, that a Clergyman who travelled in company with Thomas Mansel Talbot, Esq. of Margam, conversed with certain people in the Highlands of Scotland in the Welsh language ; but, when the two gentlemen left that spot, they met with no one in all the Highlands, to whom they could make any communication in the language of their own native country.

Bede, the Anglo-Saxon, makes mention of five languages spoken in Britain in the age in which he lived ; namely, that of the Britons or Welsh, of the Scots, the Picts, the Anglo-Saxons, and the Romans. It was not two hundred years from the battle of Catteraeth, when the native Britons were defeated and lost the kingdom of Northumberland, to the death of Bede : we may, therefore, infer that Bede was not unacquainted with persons who spoke the British language ; the Latin he was familiar with ; the Anglo-Saxon was his mother-tongue ; and to the Scottish, or Irish, he could be no stranger ; as there were Scots resident at Lindisfarn, and perhaps at his own monastery, at Monk's Wearmouth.

But was Bede acquainted with the Pictish, or had he a just conception in what it differed from the language of the Scots, and of the Britons ? Is it not reasonable to suppose, that the language of the Picts bore an affinity to either the Gaelic or the Cymbro-British ? As the Scots brought their language with them from Ireland, and by degrees subdued the Picts, and deprived them of their sovereignty ; I conclude, that the latter were a different people, and spoke a different language. It then follows, that the Caledonians, who went under the name of Picts, made use of a dialect of the Cymbro-British language. Whether we consider the Picts as the original Britons of the north-eastern coast, or a people of a Scandi-



navian stock, they were distinct from the Irish, and therefore their language was not the same as that of the Hibernian Scots; but, in the course of time, both the blood and language of the people became blended together.

The fragments of ancient poetry handed down to us as the productions of Aneurin the Ottadinian, Llywarch the Cumbrian prince, and Myrdhin the Caledonian, are as intelligible to a good Welshman of the present age, as the works of Taliesin of North Wales; and all these are much in the same language, (making allowance for the stile of poetry,) as the laws of Prince Howel composed in the tenth century, in South Wales. These latter are written in a stile of Welsh composition, which, to the present day, is esteemed classical. There is a difficulty, it is true, arising from allusions to customs and usages, which have now no more an existence. The peculiar dialect of our principality is become a provincial, and no longer the national tongue: it is no longer the organ of law, nor the speech of the court.

There has been rarely found any one possessed of that ingenuity and perseverance, that ardor for investigating Celtic antiquities, as to be able to render himself master of the ancient languages of Britain and Ireland, in conjunction with the language of Bretany, a language still spoken through a considerable extent of country. Mr. Edward Lloyd, (or Lhuyd,) devoted his attention to the subject, with great assiduity. The collections in his *Archæologia Britannica* comprise;

1. A comparative Etymology of the various Celtic tongues in connection with the Greek and Latin.
2. A comparative Vocabulary, or Harmonicon of the Original Languages of Britain and Ireland.
3. An Armoric Grammar.
4. An Armoric-English Vocabulary.

5. Additions to Dr. Davies's Latin and Welsh Dictionary.

6. A Cornish Grammar.

7. A Catalogue of Cambro-British Manuscripts.

8. An Essay towards a British Etymologicon ; to which is annexed an Appendix, containing a list of certain words, of most common use and occurrence in several European languages.

9. We have next A brief Introduction to the Irish, or Ancient Scottish Language.

10. An Irish-English Dictionary.

The author of the *Archæologia* has not been excelled for his general acquaintance with the languages of the Celtic stock ; but, in the Welsh, he has been surpassed by Mr. Owen and Mr. E. Williams. General Vallancey is celebrated for his knowledge of Irish antiquities and the Irish language ; but we appear to have no *Breton*, who has surpassed Father Pezron in his acquaintance with the Armoric, as well as his profound knowledge of ancient history.

In a subsequent part of our work, I may take some notice of the present state of those languages ; observing only, at present, that we have the Sacred Scriptures in every language spoken in the British isles, new editions having been lately published of the Irish and Gaelic ; and there have been repeated editions of the Welsh in this as well as in the two last centuries. The Mankemen have the Scriptures in the dialect of their small island ; but *the Bretons of France* have not as much as the New Testament in their ancient tongue. There appears to be no one likely to undertake such a work ; except some Welshman engage in it, and thus make some return, after the lapse of numerous ages, for the labours of Garmon and his associates in our island, in the fourth century.

*That the Ancient Britons were acquainted with the  
Use of Letters.*

XI.—THAT our ancestors were not destitute of elementary written characters, is the general opinion of our antiquaries ; and we cannot well conceive how any people, who had among them such an order of men as the Druids, should be ignorant of letters. We have the positive testimony of Cæsar, when speaking of the Druids, that they made use of characters, which so nearly resembled the Greek, that he affirms they were the Greek letters. There are different copies of the Greek alphabet, presenting considerable variations ; and, in attending to the tradition retained among the Cambro-Britons, we have some explanation of what Cæsar has advanced. The dogmas of philosophy, and the mysteries of religion, were not committed to writing by those ancient sages ; as, on the one hand, they wished to invigorate the memory, which written memorials, according to them, only tended to impair ; and on the other hand, they were careful of suffering any thing which they communicated to their novitiates, to be divulged out of the bounds of their own society. But the superior Druids, at least, were men of letters, and had recourse to writing for various civil purposes.

There were several ancient nations, whom the Greeks and Romans called Barbarians, that had among them written characters in very remote ages. The ingenious Dickinson engages to affirm, that the Britons, Gauls, and Iberians, had among them the use of letters at an earlier period than the Greeks. The Umbri and Etrusci, the most ancient nations of Italy, were the first

descendants of Japheth, by Gomer, from whom the Celts deduce their original; and the Romans were considerably indebted to the Etruscans, for their knowledge of letters, civilization, and religion. The Iberians, according to Strabo, had the knowledge of the arts from as remote a period as the reign of Ninus, the founder of the Assyrian empire, that is, two thousand years before the commencement of the Christian æra. Even so far back are that people said to have been possessed of written records, poems, and laws: and Berosus says, that, in the fourth year of the reign of Ninus, *Tuisco* taught the Germans the use of letters; *Tubal*, the Celto-Iberians; and *Samothès*, the Celts. But *Samothès*, was no other than *Dis*, from whom, says Cæsar, the Gauls derived their origin. This *Aides*, or *Dis*, was the same as *Aedd* the Great, the father of the *Ædui*, the most ancient nation of the Gauls; and we have the same name in our *Triads*, where he is said to be the father of *Prydain*. These names are ultimately to be referred to the patriarch Japheth, who became the object of idolatrous veneration among the nations of Europe.

As there is reason to believe that the use of letters was familiar to the inhabitants of the antediluvian world, we are not to be surprised that the traditions of every ancient people, ascribe to their remote progenitors so valuable an acquisition.

The origin of alphabetical characters, is a subject which has given rise to many ingenious discussions, both among the ancients and the moderns. Many have considered letters, as well as speech, to be the immediate gift of God; but, in general, the former has been regarded as a posterior communication. While some regard the tables of the law as the first specimen of alphabetical writing, others contend that mankind were acquainted with

letters in a far earlier period ; and a recent author piously and plausibly makes speech and letters coeval, as the gift of heaven, to the first man.

The Rev. Edward Davies has investigated this subject, in relation to the Celtic nations, so ably and so luminously, as to remove every doubt respecting the claim set up in behalf of our British ancestors : he has proved that the characters called the Bardic letters are the same as what the Druids made use of. These bear a near affinity to the ancient characters of the Pelasgi and the Etruscans,\* as well as the Runic letters of the north of Europe. But we have no ancient alphabet so well preserved, in such a state of simplicity and uniformity, and at this day so surprisingly adapted to the genius of the Cambro-British language.

These characters are given in Mr. Owen's Welsh Grammar, and in the Celtic Researches, bearing a close affinity to the letters of the most ancient Greek and Roman alphabets ; but the whole series is arranged on so simple and natural a scale, and a principle so peculiar, as to evince that the people who made use of them were no mean proficient in the structure of language.

Previous to the use of those materials which were prepared and applied by civilized nations to the purposes of writing, mankind, in a rude state of society, had recourse to various methods of communicating intelligence, promoting science, and recording events. Tablets of wood and stone were the most common ; but a most singular method, which obtained among the ancient Britons, has been handed down to us, of which I have a spe-

\* See the Etruscan and Pelasgic alphabets, as given by Mr. Astle, from Gori and Swinton. Compare the Bardic letters with these, and with the inscriptions in the Classical Journal, No. 3 and 4. ; taken from certain monuments of antiquity found at the ancient Saguntum, in the country of the Celto-Iberians.

cimen, communicated by that ingenious antiquary Mr. Edward Williams, the bard of Glamorgan.

The British Bards formed either trilateral or squared billets of wood, on which they inscribed their verses : a number of these, generally ten, were fixed in a frame, composed of two splitted pieces fastened together, so that every stave turned round in the frame ; and by this means every side was easily read. This sort of *book* they called *Peithynen*, a word signifying a smooth, plain surface, or the Elucidator. Mr. Edward Williams has seen one very old specimen of the *Peithynen* : this mode of writing, he supposes, has not been in use among the Bards during the two last centuries, so that very few Welshmen knew of such a device, until it was first communicated by Mr. Williams and Mr. Owen to the world, in Fry's *Pantographia*.

The *Cyvrinach y Beirdd*, or The Bardic Mystery, was known but by few in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, as appears from a bard of the name of Llewelyn John, who says, that, in the preceding century, the Bards were in the habit of cutting or inscribing their verses on the *Peithynen*, in the ancient character. The bards of the middle ages are full of allusions to this mode of writing ; and the proper Welsh word for that useful art is *torri llythyrennau*, i. e. cutting or carving letters ; the usual word *sgrifennu*, writing, being derived from the Latin word *scribo*, *scriben-tes*, &c. : from which same source comes the English word *scrivener*.

The Welsh have no word of their own for *inscribing* and *engraving* ; but the authors of the Welsh Version of the Bible use the word *naddu*, which properly signifies to *hew* or square either stone or timber. In the Welsh Poets the word is applied to the composition of song.

Mr. Astle denies our being in possession of an ancient British alphabet, while he acknowledges the existence of

ancient Gaulish characters, taken from actual inscriptions. But if that gentleman had studied British Remains, he would have found evidence of certain characters on our ancient monuments displaying an origin not purely Roman. Those ancient letters, having been applied, like the northern runes, to the purposes of incantation, would necessarily fall into discredit among the Britons, upon the establishment of Christianity. But Mr. Whitaker, it is stated, could discover no other than Roman characters on our ancient coins: as to this, let those coins which Mr. Whitaker has given us, as well as those in Camden, be examined, and it will appear that some of them bear a character exactly the same as those of our Bardic alphabet. Whether they are the *Græcæ literæ* of Cæsar, or not, I leave open for discussion; but they are certainly marked with a stronger resemblance to some very ancient Greek letters than to the Roman. But, as to Cæsar's expression, it may imply, that some of the Druids had, by communication with the Phœcean colony at Marseilles, acquired the use of Greek characters, and applied them to their own language; while the Bardic runes were sacred to themselves, and used for mystic purposes. Mr. Astle's notion, that Cæsar's expression must be applied only to the Druids of Gaul is indefensible, for it is evident that the Roman is speaking of the whole order; with this distinction, indeed, that he speaks of the Druids of Britain as far superior to those of Gaul, so that it cannot fairly be inferred that the masters were inferior, in any qualification, to the scholars.

As to the character in use after the departure of the Romans, and the coming over of the Saxons, such as we find in some old manuscripts, and are called Saxon, this was a mixture, I apprehend, of the Roman with some of the British letters.—See what Mr. Edward Lluyd has ad-

vanced on this subject in his Preface to his *Archæologia Britannica*.

For a variety of particulars relative to the letters in use among the Ancient Britons, their affinity to other alphabets, their origin, and a very curious hypothesis, as to the general source from which letters first proceeded, I refer to Mr. Davies's *Celtic Researches*.

I would also refer the Reader to what Mallett has advanced in the *Northern Antiquities*, on the subject of the Scandinavian runes. What that author advances to prove that the Scandinavian nations had the use of letters previous to their embracing Christianity, will apply with equal force to the case of our ancestors.

Upon this subject I shall produce one argument of a particular kind, arising from the ancient customs of the Britons: this argument, according to an ingenious and learned antiquary, decides the disputed point, whether writing was known to the ancestors of our nation, prior to the arrival of the Romans in this island. The art of writing, among them, could not have been applied to preserve any of the peculiar institutions of Druidism, either political or religious. Every disciple was required to commit the whole to memory; and of this he was to afford due proof at their stated meetings. We have the testimony of foreign writers, that they preferred trusting their arcana to oral tradition, rather than to the uncertainty of written memorials, in that period of society when the state of composition must have been confined to exceedingly narrow limits.

The principal use, therefore, made of writing, would be to note remarkable events, next to the recording of some particular proofs, enjoined by the laws, some of which it may be proper to mention. The law of Gavel-kind, or equal distribution of property among co-relatives, had an



universal operation ; and many usages were founded on this law, which required a direct proof of kindred pedigree for several generations ; and to attain this with facility, recourse would be had to writing. For instance, it was incumbent on a man to produce a clear record of his pedigree for nine generations, to entitle him to the rank of a freeman ; and, consequently, to his allotment of property in the community. His pedigree was then, in fact, his title-deed to whatever was possessed by him ; therefore, those records were not the vague list of names, which writers, unacquainted with the laws of the Britons, have generally considered them.

Another instance of law usage, requiring a clear proof, was, that system of fine and compensation for crimes, by which the family of a guilty individual was affected, to the ninth degree of consanguinity, with respect to the contribution to be levied ; as, also, was the family of the person suffering the injury, in partaking of each his respective share of the compensation made by the other party ; and which was done on both sides, in ratios, according to the degrees of relationship.

Such precautions being required, as are above-mentioned, in preserving proofs of kindred, amongst private persons ; it must necessarily follow, that the British chieftains were not less jealous of having a clear title to the supremacy, which they exercised over their respective tribes ; for it was only by being regularly the heads of the most ancient families that they could aspire to such honourable distinctions.

Some of those pedigrees having escaped the ravages of time, and being preserved under the before-mentioned necessity of being correct, we cannot do less than consider them as curious and valuable. See Cambrian Register, Vol. II.

The ingenious author of the historical sketch, from

which the above passage is cited, promised to pursue the same topic, when he should have to treat of the Roman period; but, as the publication was not continued any longer, the public are not in possession of the further remarks of that gentleman.

Objections may be adduced of a specious kind against what has been now advanced on behalf of the use of letters among the early Britons; but let it be considered whether the main argument will not militate against many well attested facts in ancient history, namely, that the Britons were not in that state of civilization which the knowledge of letters, it is argued, must necessarily imply. This might have some force if it were pretended that the Britons were so generally acquainted with letters, as to have such an effect on the community; but we suppose that this knowledge was possessed only by a few, who, on that account, were regarded with a superstitious awe. We may conceive a few in various rude nations, capable of retaining an art handed down from remote antiquity, and used for peculiar purposes, and exercised in a manner suited to their rude circumstances. Among many an uncultivated people efforts of ingenuity are discoverable, which have enabled them to effect designs, which our artists would pronounce impossible to be accomplished without the use of the means we now possess. We have been too forward to draw conclusions in this way to please our own vanity, and are too apt to be elated with a sense of the superiority of the present state of the world in which we live.

*Commencement of the Roman-British period.*

**XII.**—WHATEVER obscurity veils the history of Britain in its more early ages, we are now going to take a view of it in that period when it was about to occupy a more conspicuous station among the nations of the earth. Our island, annexed to the widely extended dominion of the Romans, those masters of the world, became an important acquisition to their empire, and the theatre of many great events.

Julius Cæsar, while engaged in the conquest and subjugation of the various nations of Gaul; partly from curiosity, and partly from motives of ambition, turned his attention to the contiguous island of Britain. He made enquiry respecting its shores and harbours, and the number of its inhabitants, whom with respect to their religion, customs, and manners, he was informed, were not very different from those of Gaul.

That great general has rendered his name as illustrious among the authors of antiquity by his writings, as he was famed for his military achievements. His own account of his wars has been greatly admired; and few have rivalled Cæsar as an historic writer, any more than surpassed him as a general.

The expedition of Cæsar to Britain afforded him an opportunity of informing himself of the situation of our ancestors, and giving posterity a masterly, although a concise, description of their religion and manners.

As the Britons were in the habit of aiding the natives of Gaul in their struggles with the Romans, this afforded Cæsar a pretext for invading their country. Some of the inhabitants of the coast were intimidated, by his threatening messages, to promise submission to the Ro-

mans ; but the British chiefs, in general, were resolved to assert their independence.

The most potent of the British princes was Caswallon, or Cassibelan, whose territory was in Hertfordshire : this hero, was chosen by the other confederates to command the forces, in the war of Cæsar. One Comus, a Gaulish prince, was sent by the Roman general to use his endeavour to bring over the principal Britons to the Roman interest ; but he was so far from succeeding in his mission, that, instead of gaining his end, he was detained as a prisoner.

Cæsar's first landing on this island, was in the fifty-fifth year previous to the Christian æra : the day has been determined to be the 26th of August. He cast anchor in the channel near Dover ; but, seeing the cliffs covered with hostile Britons, he weighed again, and set sail in quest of a favourable place for disembarking his troops. The place where he landed is supposed to be *Deal*.

After a fierce opposition from the Britons, Cæsar disembarked his troops ; and, after some hot skirmishes, in which the natives displayed the greatest hardiness and valour, they were compelled to give way to the superior arms and discipline of the Romans, and to sue for peace. But, being stimulated to fresh onsets, by some circumstances which fell out unfavourable to the Romans, they did not consider themselves bound to submit, while they had any prospect of striking a successful blow. Cæsar's gallees were greatly damaged by the high autumnal tides, and a storm which ensued ; and his cavalry had been obliged to put back to the continent, as they were not able to make the British shore. The Britons perceiving the panic with which the Roman troops were struck, in consequence of these unfavourable omens, resolved to turn it to their own advantage. They fell upon their enemies in the most resolute manner, and brought them into the

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most imminent danger ; but Cæsar, by exerting all his skill and intrepidity, saved his troops from being cut to pieces.

The incessant rains, which followed for some time, occasioned a cessation of hostilities. The British chiefs improved this season as a fit opportunity for dispatching messengers in every direction, to raise the whole force of the country ; concluding, that they now had a fair prospect of utterly extirpating their invaders.

The vast force which was thus mustered was led into the field to oppose the Romans ; but the rude bravery and undisciplined valour of the natives proved insufficient to withstand the masters of the world. They were routed with great slaughter, and the country laid desolate ; after which the victors returned in triumph to their camp.

Cæsar, even after this signal victory, was not disposed to push forward into the country ; he contented himself with entering into terms with the people whom he had humbled ; and peace was offered them on the following conditions :—that they should pay an annual tribute to the Romans ; and, as a security for the fulfilment of their engagement, they were to double the number of the hostages. Cæsar repaired the damage done to his gallies ; and embarking his troops, after a stay of three weeks in Britain, he quitted its shores.

The great Roman, not being satisfied with his achievements in the first expedition, made preparation for a second, upon a larger scale than the former, hoping to make a complete conquest of the island. By the spring, he equipped a formidable armament, consisting of five legions, and two thousand horse ; eight hundred vessels being in readiness to convey those troops to the British shore. In order to secure the tranquillity of Gaul dur-

ing his absence, he took along with him all the principal chieftains.

Cæsar had a decent pretext for invading Britain a second time, arising from the following circumstance : Cassibelan, prince of the Catti, or Cassii, in Hertfordshire, and of the Cattiuchlauni, in Bucks, was an aspiring man, for, after the former departure of Cæsar, he over-ran the country of the Trinobantes, slew Immanuentius, and took possession of his dominion. His son, Mandubratius, or Avarwy, as the Welsh call him, fled over to Gaul, and placed himself under the protection of Cæsar, promising him his support and alliance if he would invade Britain a second time. Cæsar was ready to lend his ear to the complaint of this young chieftain, who, out of mere resentment, and a desire of revenge, thus betrayed the liberties of his country. The name of *Avarwy* has been handed down to posterity among the black list of traitors.

Cæsar, after repeated proofs of British valour, at length compelled the prince of the Cassii, the generalissimo of the confederate Britons, to make his submission to the Roman power. To this the Briton could not be made to stoop, until his capital was taken, and the confederates were dispersed, owing to a want of union in their councils ; and he now saw all his measures frustrated. The Trinobantes hated Cassibelan, and they rejoiced in his ruin. The Roman general, through the medium of Comus the Atrebatian, was easily induced to accept of proposals from his brave and formidable antagonist, being glad to put an end to an expedition from which he had little prospect of deriving any lasting advantage. The peace was concluded on the following terms : that Cassibelan should, in future, abstain from molesting Mandubratius, and his subjects the Trinobantes ; and that the Britons should give a certain number

of hostages, and pay a yearly tribute to the Romans. "It seems probable," says Dr. Henry, "that Cæsar insisted upon these stipulations, rather, with a view to save his honour, than from any expectation that they would ever be fulfilled."

Cæsar now marched his army back to the coast, and gave immediate orders for their embarkation. He arrived in Gaul on the 26th of September.

The reflections of Dr. Henry, in his excellent History of Great Britain, on these two expeditions of Cæsar, are just and appropriate; and to them I refer the Reader. Even as the narrator of his own exploits, we find nothing that greatly tends to advance his reputation, or to afford him fresh laurels: on the contrary, if we credit British tradition, he had reason to congratulate himself in that his career of glory was not terminated in Britain. The Roman writers do not speak of him as having affected any conquest, but merely as having shewn the way to Britain.

Lucan observes of him, satirically enough—

*Territa quæsitis ostendit terga Britannis.*

The Chronicle represents, that Cæsar, in his first expedition, was personally attacked with so much gallantry by Ninio, the brother of the British generalissimo, that he narrowly escaped with his life. It could not be expected that a circumstance of that kind should transpire from the pen of Cæsar.

The Britons, fighting from their war-chariots, armed with iron hooks, carried terror and devastation into the ranks of the Roman soldiers. They managed these with the greatest agility, advancing with briskness, then retreating, and again rallying, as opportunity offered. The car-borne heroes of Erin, whose battles are recorded by

the muse of Ossian, fought in a similar manner in their wars with the Britons.

The disunion among the British chiefs, and the disastrous treachery of the Trinobantian prince, with the skilful policy of Cæsar, led to the subjugation of Cassibelan; but as the conquest of the island does not appear to have been maturely contemplated at this time, and the affairs of Gaul were in a turbulent state, the Roman had an opportunity of declining any further attempts on the country, and withdrawing in an honourable way.

Cæsar being fully occupied with the civil wars in Italy, and having to accomplish his ambitious project of setting himself at the head of the Roman commonwealth, had no further leisure to attend to the Isle of Britain. His nephew and successor, Octavius, who afterwards received the honourable appellation of Augustus, was a pacific prince, more desirous of maintaining his new dignity at the head of the Roman republic, and defending the conquests already acquired, than of enlarging his dominions.\* The Romans, at that time, were too deeply involved in the commotions occasioned by the ambition of Julius Cæsar and Octavius, to attempt the subjugation of our island.

Tiberius troubled not himself concerning Britain; he left our ancestors to remain undisturbed, while Cunobelin, the son of Cassibelan, the supreme chieftain of the tribes who had fought with Cæsar, took care to cultivate the friendship of Tiberius, by paying him the tribute

\* Cæsar's enterprize was not generally viewed in the light of a conquest: Tacitus affirms that he rather shewed Britain to the Romans than conquered it. When Augustus crossed the Alps into Gaul, he is said to have conceived a design of subduing Britain; but he contented himself with the tribute and oblations brought over by the British chiefs.



which the dictator had imposed upon the Britons. The Romans carried on a considerable commercial intercourse with the island; and having thereby acquired more accurate information respecting the state of the country, they began to be extremely desirous of adding it to the rest of their territories. This well suited the humour of Caligula, the successor of Tiberius, who hoped to gain considerable honour by such an achievement as the conquest of Britain. He made preparations for the expedition with an enthusiastic ardour, passed the Alps, and marched through Gaul, until he arrived on the coast opposite to Britain, where he ordered his troops to be drawn up in order of battle. After many childish manœuvres, he ordered the soldiers to gather shells, and those were sent to Rome as the spoils of the ocean, and served to adorn the mock-triumph which the senate decreed him: and he afterwards assumed the name of Britannicus.

The vain-glorious Caligula was the more easily induced to meditate the conquest of Britain, which he so indolently and abruptly declined, from the following circumstance: Adminius, the son of Cunobelin, had been driven out of the island by his own father, and fled to Rome, to make his appeal to the emperor. Cunobelin had punctually paid the tribute which Cassivelaunus, his father, had been bound over to pay to the Romans.\* Some of his coins are still preserved, marked with the word TASCIA,† as well as the name of Cunobelin. He

\* That Cunobelin paid tribute to the Romans is disputed by Mr. Whitaker, from a passage in Strabo; but how this prince could have been on such terms of intimacy with Augustus and Tiberius, without paying the tribute, it is difficult to comprehend.

† The word TASCIA is satisfactorily explained by Mr. Whitaker, as being the same with the Irish word *toshich*, a leader, which may be recognized in the Highland name M'Intosh, or Mac-in-toshic; and in the Welsh *Tuysog*; or *Tywysog*; and the same word is in use among the Irish to this day, *Tuiseach* and *Taoiseach*. We have *Targ-etius*,

was prince of the Cassii and the Novantes, as well as the Trinobantes; but his dominion was now extended over the Dobuni, who inhabited Gloucestershire, and a part of Oxfordshire. His capital cities were Tre-Novant, or London; and Verolam, or St. Albans. His conquests made him the most powerful prince in all the south of Britain. He had three sons, whose names are handed down to us, Adminius, Caractacus, and Togodumnus;\* the first of whom, being appointed to reign over the Trinobantes, by his father, misbehaved himself so far in the administration of his province, that he was deposed and exiled. Adminius, upon making his complaint at Rome, was heard; and the severity used by Cunobelin against his son was regarded as a just reason for invading his country. Caligula, instead of imitating the enterprising spirit of Julius, deemed it enough to enjoy the distant prospect of the British shore.

The British chiefs were at that time well prepared to meet the Roman forces; but the pusillanimous conduct of the emperor would, in all probability, produce the effect of throwing them into that state of confident security that would render them less fit, at a subsequent season, to encounter the Emperor Claudius, who appears to have encountered no difficulty in his landing.

The following circumstance prompted Claudius to attempt the conquest of Britain: Caractacus and Togodumnus now ruled the Catti, or Cassii, and some other tribes, as successors of their deceased father Cunobelin:

and *Mori-Tasgus*, Gaulish princes contemporary with Cæsar. On some of these coins we have the inscription of TASC NO, TASC NOVA, TASC NOVANTI, or Prince of the Novantes.—*Whitaker*, Book i. cap. 9.

\* Two sons of Cunobelin are mentioned in the British History, Gwydyr and Gwayryd. *Lewis* has added these to the three mentioned by Suetonius.

they vanquished and expelled a chieftain of the Dobuni, of the name of Beric, who, with the most vindictive designs, went to Rome; and, with a treachery of which there are former instances among the Britons, urged and stimulated the indolent Emperor Claudius to undertake an expedition against Britain, his native country. The courtiers and generals of Claudius flattered him with the prospect of the honours he should acquire from the final conquest of the finest island of the globe, now divided against itself, by the civil dissensions which subsisted among the native chieftains, and by the ambition of the more powerful of them, who subdued and enslaved the petty sovereigns and states that lay contiguous to their territories.

Aulus Plautius, a person of senatorial dignity, and an experienced general, was entrusted with the army that was to effect the conquest of Britain. Being furnished with every thing suitable for so important an undertaking, he set out, and marched with his troops through Gaul to the sea-coast, from whence they were to embark for the island; but a sudden mutiny rose among the soldiers, who having been informed of the rough treatment which Julius Cæsar had met with, protested against the extreme dangers they should have to encounter, when transported, as it were, into a new world, to fight against fierce barbarians.

“ The refusal of the soldiers, which seemed at first so unpromising,” observes Dr. Smollett, “ contributed in the event to the success of the enterprize; for the Britons, being informed of the mutiny, intermitted in the measures they were taking to defend the coast, so that when the Roman army submitted of their own accord to the orders of their general, they made a descent on the island without opposition.” The contrary winds they met with rather terrified them on their passage, until a meteor ap-

in all the state of an eastern monarch ; and the news of his general's success was no small matter of exultation. " So great a matter was it deemed," says Milton, " even for Roman troops and Roman generals to meet the native and naked valour of the Britons, when defending their own country."

Claudius hastened to embark for Marseilles, from whence he marched to Gessoriacum, or Boulogne, where he took shipping for the British coast, with a considerable reinforcement, and landed safely at the Portus Rutupinus, now called Sandwich.

As soon as the soldiers were disembarked, Claudius proceeded to the banks of the Thames, on which Plautius was encamped. The two armies being joined, and the soldiers already victorious, although not without sustaining many losses, were animated with new courage now they had the emperor at their head ; therefore, although the Britons bravely disputed the passage, the Romans crossed the Thames into the territory of the Trinobantes, and took Camolodunum, the capital.

These victories had such an effect upon some of the British tribes, that they resorted to the emperor's camp, to make their submission. These were the Belgæ, as Smollett supposes, who were not so long settled in the country ; but none of the ancient natives would give up their independence excepting the Iceni, who courted the alliance of the Romans. Caractacus still kept the field, undaunted after the losses he had sustained ; and continued for many years to cherish the love of liberty and independence among his countrymen.

Claudius did not think proper to expose his person for any length of time in Britain. Having received the submission of those tribes who surrendered themselves, he returned to Rome, from whence he had been absent six months, and in Britain only sixteen days. Claudius now

assumed the title of *Britannicus*, from his conquests obtained in Britain, the honour of which he took to himself, and left *Plautius* to conclude the campaign.


While *Plautius* was combating those Britons who were subject to the sons of *Cunobelin*, he found a fierce enemy in the valiant *Caractacus*, who continued to oppose him. *Vespasian* was engaged in a different part of the island, and his success was equal to his great talents. He subdued and took possession of the whole extent of country on the sea-coast, from *Kent* to the *Land's end*, including *Hampshire*, *Wiltshire*, *Somersetshire*, and *Cornwall*, the most part of which, in a former age, the *Belgæ* had reduced into their power. The *Durotriges*, and some others, had maintained their original independence; but even these were overpowered by the arms of *Rome*, and the military skill of the great *Vespasian*, who, on his return to the capital, was honoured with a triumph, and had the consulship conferred on him.

*Aulus Plautius*, although a consummate general, found himself exposed to a variety of dangers, while he had to combat with the undaunted courage, and invincible fortitude, of *Caractacus*. This celebrated chieftain was cool, penetrating, and persevering: from his experience and judgment he was fertile in expedients; and his patience in adversity was such, that his repeated defeats only served to stimulate him to new attempts. But, with all these great qualities, he was unable to withstand the arms, and military discipline, of the Romans. He, therefore, employed himself in skirmishes, and harassed the Roman army with great success; and his parties, when overmatched, retreated to mountains, fens, and fastnesses, unknown and inaccessible to the enemy. But *Plautius* proceeded in his conquests; and subjugated the *Dobuni*, *Ancalites*, and *Trinobantes*, or the people of *Gloucestershire*, *Oxfordshire*, *Middlesex*, and *Essex*.

On his return to Rome, he enjoyed the honours of an Ovation, or lesser triumph.

After an interval of two years, Aulus Plautius was succeeded by Publius Ostorius Scapula.

P. Ostorius found matters in a very critical state, owing to the fierce and untractable spirit of the natives, who were incessantly making inroads on those parts of the country which the Romans had brought under their dominion. The Britons were aware of the disadvantageous situation of the new general, who had to command troops with whom he was not yet acquainted, and was a stranger to the country; besides that, winter was approaching. They became over confident, that under such disadvantages, the general would not think of soon attacking them; but his actions quickly convinced them of their mistake. He first subdued the Iceni, or Norfolkmen, who were for asserting their independence. He then placed garrisons on the river Anton, or the Nen, in Northamptonshire; and fortified the passages of the Severn. He then proceeded to lay waste the territory of the Cangi, or the Cheshire men; from thence he passed over into the country of the Ordovices, or men of North-Wales, who were not prepared to oppose him. He was subduing all before him, to the Irish Sea, when he was informed of the turbulent spirit of the Brigantes, who were for throwing off the Roman yoke. That people, whose territory at that time seems to have included a part of Lancashire, and perhaps of Cheshire, were quickly reduced, and brought to submit to the power of Rome. But the Silures were become so untractable, that it required no small force to subdue them. That warlike people inhabited a country intersected by rivers, and defended by woods and mountains, which, with their natural bravery, rendered them very troublesome to the Romans. Their territory comprised the counties of




Hereford and Monmouth ; and, according to most of our antiquaries, the counties of Glamorgan and Brecon.\*

Caractacus had now placed himself at the head of the Silures and some other tribes, who were the most inveterate against the Romans, and the most jealous of their independence. This great prince, from his experience in war, and his persevering opposition to the progress of the Roman arms, was the most competent to inspire the Britons with ardour and courage in the grand struggle they were now making for the independence of their country. Caractacus having long withstood the force of that people, and being sensible that the whole of their power was to be directed against him, used every precaution to render himself formidable. With that view he passed the Severn, moving the seat of war to the borders of the Ordovices, where he chose a situation, such as he deemed highly advantageous to himself, and embarrassing to the enemy. He pitched his camp in a place on the edge of Shropshire, contiguous to Radnorshire, and since called *Caer Caradoc*,† or the camp of Caractacus. This British camp was situated on the top of a high hill, the sides of which were abrupt and difficult of access, fortified by a rampart of high stones. The foot of the hill was defended by a deep river. The hero himself went round the camp, incessantly animating his officers and leaders, exclaiming that now was the time, and that this was the place, where they must fight for their liberty, or be for ever slaves.

\* See the ancient divisions of Britain at the conclusion of this part of the work.

† The spot is still to be distinguished on the top of a steep hill, where the traces of a camp may be seen surrounded by stone ramparts, though now covered with earth. The river Colun, or Clun, runs by, and falls into the Teme, which divides Shropshire from Herefordshire.

He reminded them of the bravery of their ancestors, who had repulsed Julius Cæsar, and by whose valour they had lived free from tribute and servitude, and preserved their wives and children from dishonour. The Britons, by their shouts and exclamations, testified their enthusiastic ardour, declaring with dreadful imprecations that the greatest extremities would never oblige them to yield to their enemies. Their undaunted resolution amazed the Roman general; but his soldiers were clamorous to be led on to the attack, exclaiming that their valour was sufficient to surmount all obstacles; and the tribunes, and other officers, used every method to enkindle the ardour of the troops. Ostorius, having minutely surveyed the situation of the Britons, and perceiving where he might most safely make his assault, crossed the river with the troops, and passed over without difficulty. Having approached the rampart on the side least difficult of access, the conflict became exceeding sharp and bloody, and the slaughter of the Romans was very great. Undismayed, however, by such a terrible reception, they resolved to storm the British camp; and, therefore, according to their usual practice on such occasions, they placed their targets over their heads, and closing their ranks, in that impenetrable form they made a breach in the camp, and forced their way through; when, coming to close quarters with the Britons, they at length drove them from their entrenchment further up the mountain. From thence, as they wore neither mail nor helmet, they were dislodged, by the well-armed Roman legionaries who attacked them with their heavy swords and javelins, or by the pikes and spears of the auxiliaries. Their stern but inefficacious valour had no resource against the discipline and arms of the Romans. The wife and daughter of the British chief, together with his brothers, were taken prisoners, while he, having





made his escape, betook himself to Cartismandua, queen of the Brigantes; and, depending on her generosity, he was infamously betrayed by her into the hands of his enemies. Such was the fate of that great British champion, who, according to Tacitus, had now for *nine years* so nobly withstood the Roman arms; although Milton computes the time to have been two years less. The historian, with true generosity, expatiates with delight upon the fame of our hero. He informs us that his name was become illustrious through all Italy, as well as the provinces. When he was brought to Rome by order of the emperor Claudius, all ranks of people were anxious to see this wonderful man, who had for so long a space of time spurned the alliance, and opposed the arms of the Romans. The senate spoke in high terms of the atchievment performed by the capture of Caractacus, and compared it with the most magnificent of those conquests which had added to their national glory; as when the Numidian Syphax had been reduced by Publius Scipio, and Perseus by Paulus Emilius, or when at any period the most potent monarchs had submitted to the Romans. The manner in which the British prince was presented before Claudius, and his behaviour on the occasion, are described by Tacitus. That day was considered as the time of some grand spectacle, the emperor's guards were placed in order, and himself seated on his tribunal, while the captives were ordered to be brought into his presence. First appeared the vassals of the British prince, with the trappings and spoils of the war; these were followed by his wife, brothers, and daughters, imploring mercy in the most abject terms; then, last of all, came Caractacus himself, with a dignified aspect, betraying neither fear nor perplexity in his countenance. Approaching the tribunal, he is said to have addressed the emperor as follows:—

“ Had my moderation been equal to my birth and fortune, I had arrived in this city, not a captive but an ally ; nor would you have disdained the alliance of a prince, like me, descended from illustrious progenitors, and vested with the supreme authority over many warlike nations. My present fate redounds as much to your honour, as to my own disgrace. I was in possession of vassals, horses, arms, and wealth :—what wonder then that I was unwilling to be deprived of them ? for, though you are ambitious of universal empire, it does not follow that all men ought tamely to submit to your dominion. Had I surrendered myself in the beginning of the conquest, neither my misfortune, nor your glory, would have attracted the attention of the world ; and my fate would have been buried in oblivion. But if you now spare my life, I shall be an eternal monument of your clemency.”

The emperor was so struck with the deportment of the prince, the capital of whose patrimonial territory he had himself entered while in Britain, and so affected with the noble simplicity and undaunted spirit of his address, that he ordered both him and his relations to be freed and pardoned.

The Britons could now entertain no rational hope of gaining their independence ; but the spirits of the Silures, and some other tribes, were unconquered. The loss of their hero, and a report that their extermination was resolved upon, exasperated them to the highest degree. They cut off several detachments of the Roman troops ; and the General Ostorius was so harrassed by them, that he died oppressed with grief and disappointments.

Aulus Didius was the person who succeeded Ostorius, and he found things in a very unsettled state. Cartimandua having been married to Venutius, prince of the *Uiccii*, or *Vigantes*, inhabiting Warwickshire and Worcestershire, soon after their marriage separated

from her husband, which caused a war between them. As the reward of her treachery, in delivering up Caractacus, she expected the aid of the Romans; and, according to the policy of that people, she received that assistance, which rendered her victorious. This infamous princess soon after married her general Vellocatus, by which conduct she instigated the minds of her subjects to revolt against her, and Venutius got possession of a great part of her territories. The Romans marched to her aid, and saved her person from captivity, but failed to reinstate her in her possessions. In this distracted state of affairs, Didius was called home, and was replaced by Veranius, under the empire of Nero; but he dying soon after his appointment, was succeeded by Suetonius Paulinus, who, by his prudence and vigorous measures, established the Roman power in Britain.

This General, hearing that the Isle of Anglesea was a receptacle for those Britons who were the most inveterate against the Romans, and that they were harboured by the Druid priests, resolved to be revenged of them. This he effected in a most ferocious manner.

About that time the Britons made a general revolt under Boadicea, queen of the Iceni, and widow of Prasutagus. The cruel and insulting oppressions which the Britons had now for some time experienced, exasperated them to that degree, that they rose upon the inhabitants of Camalodunum, who were Roman citizens, slaughtering them without mercy. The forces of the united Britons amounted to two hundred and thirty thousand fighting men, and were commanded by Boadicea.\* They ravaged the whole of the country which

\* Boadicea or Boudnica, whom the Britons called Budhic, was a woman of a tall and comely person, and dignified aspect, with a

was subject to the Romans, slaying and burning all, without distinction of age or sex. The dreadful effect of this insurrection was the destruction of seventy thousand lives.

The Roman general collected his forces together, and resolved to meet the revolted Britons in a general engagement. Elated with their successes, they met the Romans with great confidence, and fought with great obstinacy; but were compelled to yield: the Romans retaliated upon them with a most terrible slaughter, so that 80,000 Britons are said to have fallen by the hands of their enemies. Boadicea is affirmed to have taken poison in a fit of despair: and this disheartened the Britons from trying the success of another battle, for which they were preparing.

Suetonius had always treated the natives with great rigour; but he now made such a cruel use of his victories, that the Britons, though driven to the greatest extremities, resolved to die in defence of their liberties, rather than submit to be slaves, and that under the most aggravating circumstances. After repeated complaints of the severity of the Roman general, the emperor thought proper to recal him, and send Turpilianus as his successor, who treated the inhabitants with greater mildness and

shrill commanding voice. Her fine yellow hair flowed down to her loins; she wore a massy chain of gold about her neck; she was dressed in a flowing robe of various colours, over which was thrown a mantle of coarser stuff. She harangued her people from an elevated spot, expatiating upon their wrongs, and stimulating them to deeds of valour against their oppressors, and to prefer dying in defence of their liberties to living in disgrace. Having thus inflamed the courage of the Britons, she let loose a *harc*, which she had concealed in her bosom; and, from the manner of its bounding off, prognosticated success, and called on the name of Andraste, a female demigod of the natives.

humanity, and thereby brought back the revolted states to their obedience.

The Roman governors and commanders had now recourse to the arts of policy, to soften the rugged manners of the Britons, so as to make their yoke sit easier upon them; by those means they effected what by the force of arms they were unable to accomplish; and established the Roman power in the island, from the Thames to the Forth and the Clyde.

The arts of Roman civilization produced that change in the island as to give it quite another appearance, so that almost every thing became Roman. They established what they called colonies, or towns, occupied partly by Romans, and partly by those Britons who were incorporated with the Roman citizens. They had other towns, which they called *Municipia*; with others that partook, more or less, of the privileges the Romans were pleased to bestow upon them. Camps were laid out, and regular fortifications constructed, in the most important situations, and places assigned as regular stations and winter-quarters for the legionaries. Courts of judicature were held, according to the laws and customs of Rome; and the British nobles were invited to educate their sons in the Roman seminaries. Britain had its Roman amphitheatres, its baths, and every thing conducive to convenience and luxury, similar to the cities and towns of Italy. But still there were secluded parts of the country, where the natives retained, in many respects, their ancient manners and customs; and the different clans were subject each to its own *pen-cenedl*, or family chief.

Julius Agricola, the father-in-law of the great historian Tacitus, rendered himself famous, not only by his conquests, but the mildness and good policy of his government, and the justice of his administration. He pushed forward his victories, and attempted the subju-

gation of the nations of Caledonia ; and was also ambitious of attaining the conquest of Ireland. The Ordovices having cut in pieces a body of Roman horse, this commander avenged the cause of the Romans, by marching through their country, inflicting terrible punishment upon them for daring to assert their independence : and as Suetonius had not completed his revenge upon the college of Druids, in Mona, he executed vengeance upon them and the islanders to the uttermost.

Agricola met with the stoutest opposition from the inhabitants of North Britain, whose numbers were increased by those who withdrew from the south, to avoid the overwhelming power of the Romans, and live free in less fertile climes. The forces of Agricola encountered the Britons under their brave prince Galgacus, or Gallawg, who was most probably a Strath-Clyde chief, renowned for his great prowess. This battle, which Tacitus has minutely described, was fought at the foot of the Grampian Hills, at a place called Forten-Gall camp, sixteen miles beyond Perth ; or, according to others, in Strathern.

This engagement appears to have been one of the most desperate fought between the Romans and the natives, and more destructive than that fought with Caractacus in Shropshire. Ten thousand men, according to the Roman account, were left dead on the field before Galgacus retired from the fight. The Romans were ordered to close and flank the Caledonians on both sides ; and this obliged vast numbers to throw down their arms, and give up themselves to inevitable destruction. Those who escaped this dreadful havoc, rallying in small bodies, fell upon those of the enemy who were eagerly pursuing them in their retreat. The Romans had here another proof of the fruitless efforts of native bravery, without arms and discipline, to oppose veteran and disciplined

troops. But after this dreadful carnage, which cost the Romans but a few hundred men, the General did not think it prudent to advance further into the woods and forests of Caledonia : he marched back to the country of the Horesti, who immediately submitted to his government, and delivered hostages for their good behaviour. There he embarked a body of his troops on board the fleet, and ordered the commander to surround the whole coast of Britain, which had not been discovered to be an island till the preceding year ; he then led his army into winter quarters. The fleet steered northward, and subdued the Orkneys ; after sailing round the island, they arrived in the port of Sandwich, without having met with the least disaster.

Domitian, envious of the fame acquired by Agricola, recalled him from his government ; but, at the same time, commanded the senate to decree him triumphal honours, and a statue crowned with laurel.

Agricola, having done so much towards the complete reduction of the whole island, was greatly mortified at his recal, and did not long survive his return to Rome.

Many of the inhabitants being unhappy under the Roman authority, retired into the northern and unsubdued parts of the country, while others fled over to Ireland, which, at that time, was but thinly peopled.

In the beginning of Adrian's reign, the Caledonians became exceedingly restless, and demolished several of the forts erected by Julius Agricola : information of this induced the emperor to come over in person, to reduce the insurgents. But this prince was better advised than to advance into the Caledonian forests and morasses : he made *Eboracum*, or York, his residence ; and there concerted measures for the security and proper regulation of the Roman dominions in Britain. It appeared to the

emperor the most prudent plan to give up the country, now called the south of Scotland, to the Caledonians; judging that their restlessness was occasioned by their confinement within too narrow limits. He therefore abandoned the forts on the Clyde, and strengthened the great rampart raised by Agricola, between the Solway and the Tyne, as the boundary of the province.

At the death of Adrian, his successor, Antoninus Pius, bestowed the chief command on Lollius Urbicus, who drove the independent and insurgent Britons beyond the limits within which they had been confined by Agricola. He raised a fortification in the same direction as the former one, and formed proper stations for the soldiery who were to defend the fortresses.

The people who now occupied the countries between the walls, were subjected to the Romans, and things remained peaceable during the reign of Antoninus. During the reign of Marcus Aurelius new disturbances broke out, but were quelled by the management of Calpurnius Agricola, the proprætor.

During the reign of Commodus, the government of Britain was so ill conducted that its affairs were brought into a very bad condition: the people were oppressed, and the discipline of the troops were not properly attended to, so that disorder and discontent generally prevailed. Thus the Romans themselves, laid the foundation for all the evils which, at length, terminated in the extinction of the imperial power in Britain.

Ulpius Marcellus being appointed governor, things were brought back, for a while, to a better state: the discipline of the troops was restored, and the Caledonians were repulsed with great slaughter. After the recall of that excellent general, and upright magistrate, the affairs of the province relapsed into their former state. Pertinax, afterwards exalted to the imperial dignity, although



a man of great abilities, found it extremely difficult to effect a reformation in the state of affairs.

A. D. 197.—Septimius Severus, after the short reigns of Pertinax, and his successor Didius, having attained to sovereign power, conceiving Britain to be the most important province of the empire, resolved upon visiting it in person. Although the emperor was so crippled with the gout as to require to be carried in a litter, he meditated the complete reduction of the island; and he pursued his purpose, notwithstanding the innumerable difficulties of the enterprize, with invincible resolution, until he made his way to the most northern extremity of the island. He subdued the enemy, and made peace with them. On his return, he ordered a new rampart to be constructed, which was that strong and beautiful stone-wall called by the Britons *Clawdd Sever*, or the wall of Severus. This was on the same line as Adrian's rampart of earth. It was strengthened by castles, at the interval of every mile, and four turrets between each of them, and a deep ditch on the northern side, extending for sixty-eight miles, from Segedenum, or Cousin's House on the Tyne, to Timocelum, or Boulness, near Carlisle. The emperor, nearly exhausted with fatigue and infirmity, retired to York, leaving his son Antoninus, afterwards called Caracalla, at the head of the army. This young man provoked the Caledonians to new acts of hostility; and his father, being enraged at these new commotions, ordered his son, and the army under his command, utterly to extirpate that people. But Caracalla was more intent upon other projects; for the emperor, dying at York, he made peace with the Caledonians, and retreated into the Roman province.

From the death of Severus there is a melancholy chasm in the history of this country; but whether we may attribute that to the tranquil state of the province, or the

silence of historians, we can only form what conjectures we may be disposed to.

In the reign of Gallienus, there were no less than thirty tyrants, as they were called, in the island: some of these were Romans, who wished to set up for themselves as partners in the empire; but most of them were, in all probability, native chieftains, who, wearied of the imperial yoke, attempted to rouse the Britons to assert their former independence. But we shall here defer any further prosecution of our national history, in order to take a view of the religion of our ancestors in their heathen state, and the rank and learning of their Druid Priests and Bards, who exercised so unbounded an influence over them, until, by the power of Rome, and the prevalence of Christianity, a great revolution was effected.

It has been before observed, that the state of the Cambro-Britons, even in the tenth and twelfth century, may convince us that many of our ancestors, in certain parts of the island, during the Roman period, retained much of their primitive manners, with regard to their laws, customs, and mode of living. Their Bards continued to trace the family pedigrees of the chiefs, and the territories to which they had an ancient and just title. They recited and sang the valiant deeds of their forefathers, among the hills and dales where they had fought and fell; predicting that there was an æra to arrive, when Britain should once more be restored to the rule and government of its own sons.

Although the Romans deprived the Britons of their independence, the improvements made by them in this country must be admitted to be very great.

“At the close of the first century,” says Whitaker, “Britain had one hundred and forty towns in all. Britannia Prima comprised about forty; Britannia Secunda, fifteen; Flavia, fifty; Valentia, ten; and Maxima, twenty-

five. Each province had its own prætor, who was charged with the management and direction of the civil government; and its quæstor, who superintended the finances. Each province thus formed a kind of distinct government of itself; but the whole of the island was under one head, and subject to the authority of the pro-consul, the legate or vicarius of Britain.

Each province had its principal town, where the prætor resided, and where the chief court of justice was held; but inferior courts were held by certain deputies, appointed by the prætor in different places, where inferior causes were determined, and the decrees and edicts promulgated.

The Roman-British towns were of different degrees. They varied greatly from themselves, not merely in the rank of their civil estimation, but even in the nature of their constitutions. They were particularly distinguished into the four orders, of towns municipal, and stipendiary, colonies, and cities invested with the Latin privileges. There were two municipia, nine colonies, and ten Latin towns, in our island. "The generality of the British cities," say Whitaker, from whom I give this sketch, "was merely stipendiary. Such were Winchester, Canterbury, Exeter, and Leicester, in particular."

Some of the cities of Britain were raised above the common rank, by the communication of the Jus Latii, or Latin privilege. This was an exemption from the ordinary jurisdiction of the Prætor. The inhabitants of a Latin town were no longer governed by a foreign præfect and a foreign quæstor, but by a præfect and quæstor elected among themselves. A Briton was their president, a Briton was their justiciary, and a Briton was their tax-gatherer. And every inhabitant of such a town, that had borne the offices of prætor or quæstor, was immediately entitled to the privileges of a Roman citizen.

These rights the Romans first communicated to the conquered Latins, and afterwards extended to all the Italians. Cæsar first carried them beyond the bounds of Italy, and conferred them upon a provincial town. The cities of Britain, which received this privilege, were *Durnomagus*, or *Caster*, near *Peterborough*; *Ptoroton*, or *Inverness*; *Victoria*, or *Perth*; *Theodosia*, or *Dunbarton*; the famous *Caer Alcluyd*; *Luguballia*, or *Carlisle*; and *Sorbiodunum*, or *Salisbury*; *Corinium*, or *Cirencester*; *Cataracton*, or *Catterick*, in *Yorkshire*; *Cambodunum*, or *Slack*, in *Longwood*; and *Coccium*, or *Blackrode*, in *Lancashire*.

These kinds of towns, as well as the stipendiary towns, were inhabited chiefly by the Britons. But there were others which were chiefly possessed by the Romans, and had, therefore, a very different polity. These were colonies and municipal towns.

The commencement of the Roman colonies is said to be nearly coeval with their conquests. The first provincial colony was settled upon the site of *Carthage*. The first in Britain was that of *Camalodunum*, that is, *Colchester*, or, according to others, *Maldon*. The eight other colonies were at *Richborough*, *London*, *Gloucester*, and *Bath*, at *Caerleon* in *Monmouthshire*, *Chesterford* near *Cambridge*, *Lincoln*, and *Chester*. The different cohorts of the legionaries had their residence at those different places. These colonists were considered as Roman citizens, and entitled to the Roman privileges.

The two municipal towns, which enjoyed the highest privileges of Roman citizens, were *Verolam* and *York*.

For the illustration of the subject of old British towns, as distinguished from those purely Roman, I shall extract a passage from the commentary on the *Itinerary of Richard*: "The Romans, in the progress of their conquests, fortified such primary posts, as were best adapted to

port their future operations, established secondary posts to secure their communications, and connected the whole by military ways. From local circumstances, and the principles of war, their primary posts were either at or near the sites of the British towns, or on the principal rivers. If, therefore, the British towns and trackways were suited to their purposes, they adopted them; if not, they constructed others. But both their towns and roads differed materially from those of the original inhabitants. The Roman towns are of a regular figure, bounded by lines as straight as the nature of the ground will permit, generally square or oblong; and consisting commonly in a single wall and ditch, unless in positions peculiarly dangerous, or where local circumstances rendered additional defences necessary. On the contrary the British towns, which were occupied by the Romans, although irregularly shaped, still partake of their original figure."

There were among the ancient Britons, according to Richard, ninety-two cities, of which there were thirty-three of greater celebrity; that is, two municipal towns, York and Verolam; nine colonies, the principal of which were London, Colchester, and Richborough; ten who enjoyed the Latin privileges, and whose names have been given; and twelve that were stipendiary, some of which were of considerable eminence: the names were, Venta Silurum, Venta Belgarum, Venta Icenorum, Segontium, Muridunum, Ragæ, Cantiopolis, Durinum, Isca (Dama.), Bremenium, Vindonum, and Durobrivæ. These are supposed to be the same with Caerwent, Winchester, Castor near Norwich, Caer Segont, Caermarthen, Leicester, Canterbury, Dorchester, Exeter, Ribchester, Egbury Camp Hants, and Rochester.

## THE KINGS OF BRITAIN,

*From Hisichion and Brutus, to Dyvynwal Moelmud.*

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| 1. Hisichion, or Hy-yegûn. | 12. Cordelia.                               |
| 2. Brutus, Brito, Prydain. | 13. Cunedda.                                |
| 3. Loctrinus.              | 14. Riallon.                                |
| 4. Madoc.                  | 15. Garoost.                                |
| 5. Membyr.                 | 16. Seisyllt, or Seiriol.                   |
| 6. Evroc Cadarn.           | 17. Iago, or rather, Anten.                 |
| 7. Brutus Tarianlaes.      | 18. Kinvarch, son of Seisyllt.              |
| 8. Leon.                   | 19. Gorvyw, or Gorbodug.                    |
| 9. Rhun, Baldyr bras.      | 20. Ferrex and Porrex.                      |
| 10. Bleiddyd, or Bladud.   | 21. Dyvynwal Moelmud, or Dunwal Moelmutius. |
| 11. Llyr, or Lear.         |   |

In Ferrex and Porrex, two brothers, ended the line of Brutus, or Brito, after a continuance of six hundred years. In Dyvynwal Moelmud we have a new line, or that of the Cornish Britons, the former being that of the dynasty of the Loegrians. We are to understand that the Dukes of Cornwall now obtained the pre-eminence among the territorial sovereigns. This prince was son of Clydno, duke of Cornwall, according to the chronicle. The Triads make him to be the son of Prydain. "Some ancient pedigrees," says Lewis, "do continue the line of Brute, in Dunwallo Moelmutius in this sort ; that he was the son of *Clydno*, duke of Cornwall, the son of Cynfarch, the son of Prydain, the son of Æddmawr, the son of Antonius, the son of Seiryd (Seiriol), the son of Gorusc, &c."

Dunwal was famed for his good government, of which notice has been taken before. The period of his reign is said to have been forty years. He flourished about four hundred years before Christ. From this sovereign

to Cunobelin, whose sons were subdued by Claudius, forty-five sovereigns are enumerated. A misconception of the title, used to denote the authority of those great Barons, as we may call them, led to the error whereby they have been regarded as monarchs of the island. When any of these princes became famed for his prowess, and was successful in war, the ascendancy which he thereby gained prompted him to gratify his ambition by further conquests; and this extent of territory was confirmed, in certain instances, in the same family for some generations. Thus the princes of the Cassii aimed at the subjugation of the Dobuni on the one hand, and the Trinobantes on the other. The Silurian princes also seem to have had the Dimetæ, or the western parts of Wales, in subjection to them. The list of kings, or potent chiefs, given in the chronicle, are to be considered chiefly as comprising the family of Cornwall and Siluria, with some other princes of note among the Cassii, or Trinobantes. This island had not many inhabitants before the time at which the colony of the Britons and the Loegrians came over, which was, as some have thought, about one thousand years before the Christian æra. During so long a period, in those turbulent ages, a hundred princes must have reigned successively.

With respect to the list of British princes, who are said to have succeeded Dunwal, or Dyvynwal, instead of enumerating the names I shall only observe that the sixty-fifth was Beli the Great, to whom it was usual, among the Welsh Herald-Bards, to trace the pedigrees of their chieftains, and to proceed no further; concluding with B. M.: taking it for granted that the family which could be traced so far were of the genuine stock of British nobles. This was the practice in the age of Henry the First, as we are informed by

Geraldus Cambrensis; and there are some curious instances of these pedigrees still preserved.

What is said in the British chronicle respecting the elevation of Dunwal Moelmut, as well as the commotions owing to the discord subsisting between the rival brothers Ferrex and Porrex, intimates the unsettled state of things at that time. Ferrex is said to have fled into Gaul to obtain assistance against his brother. It was about this time that the great colony of the Belgic Gauls came over, that is, the *Ædui*, under Divitiacus. Prydain, the father of Dunwall, (according to the Triads) is said to be the son of *Ædd*, that is, he was an *Æduan*, and perhaps the same person with Divitiacus. The *Ædui* pushed forward from Cornwall to Somerset, to which they gave their own name, for it was called the country of the *Ædui*, as well as their former territory in Gaul. Some of these victors crossed the channel, it is probable, into South Wales, and by their conquests in that country drove many of the old inhabitants to seek habitations in Ireland.



*The ancient divisions of Britain, with the names of the various tribes by which it was inhabited.*

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Extracted chiefly from the Cambrian Register 1796.

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THE three grand divisions of Loegyr, Cymru, and Alban; or England, Wales, and Scotland properly so called, did not exist before the Roman conquest, for to that event the cause of their origin must be attributed, but which was not fully developed before the Saxon period. Originally the different people were content to have the natural barriers of the country, the courses of rivers, mountains, and forests, for the limits of their respective territories; and, perhaps, in no instance did several of the British tribes unite under one government for any considerable length of time, or were comprehended under a common name. To each district its inhabitants gave some appellation that was characteristic of its appearance; and, influenced by the prevailing partiality for a native spot, it generally conveyed an idea of what was fair, pleasant, or beautiful.

The whole number of tribes or independent states was about forty-five, at the coming of the Romans into the island—their names, a little disguised by a foreign orthography, were the following:

Cantii	Belgæ
Regni	Durotriges
Bibroces	Hædui
Attrebates	Damnonii
Segontiaci	Carnabii

Silures	Ordovices
Dimetæ	
Trinovantes	Dobuni
Iceni	Huicci
Coritani	Ancalites
Cassii	Carnabii
Sistuntii	Brigantes
Volantii	
Ottadini	Novantes
Gadeni	Damnii
Selgovæ	
Horestii	Vacomagi
Vecturones	Albani
Taixali	Attacotti
Caledoni	Mertæ
Cantæ	Carnonacæ
Logi	Cerones
Carnabii	Creones
Catini	Epidii

To the Romans we are chiefly indebted for these names being handed down to us; and it is but justice to remark, that they excelled all other people in the world, ancient and modern, for correctness in procuring the sound of strange words. What alterations they made therein were agreeable to a regular system, which has not been imitated by other nations.

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I.—The *CANTII* inhabited the present county of *Kent*, being bounded by the Thames on the north, and the *Le-manus*, or Rother, on the west; and their capital was *Durovernum*, *Cantiopolis*, or Canterbury. They called

their country *Caint*, (Kent,) an aggregate noun from *cain*, fair, open, as being descriptive of its general appearance; consisting of fair or open vallies, and slopes; and the appellation is common in Wales for regions that are like it: and this derivation is corroborated by the Welsh, calling Canterbury the city of Caint, or *Caer Gaint*. They might have called themselves CEINTI, Ceintiaid, Ceintion, Ceintwyr, Ceintwys, Ceintwyson, and Gwyr Caint; "so flexible," it is observed, "is the British language, and at the same time so regular!"

II.—The *REGNI* resided in Surry and Sussex; and *Regnum*, *Regentium*, or Chichester, appears, from its name, to have been their metropolis. This people inhabited a region very similar in appearance to Kent; and the name was the same, with the discriminating prefix *Rhy*, implying the foremost or farther *Cantii*; for thus would the name be formed, *RHYGEINNI*, Rhygeiniaid, Rhygeinnion, Rhygeinnwys, and Gwyr Rhygaint; or, without the mutation of the last letter, Rhygainti, Rhygeintiaid, &c.

III.—The *BIBROCES*, or Rhemi, occupied the south-eastern parts of Berkshire, from the Loden on the west to the Thames on the east; and had *Bibroicum*, *Bibracte* or Bray, for their capital.

This people, our author considers, as inhabiting a district covered with tufts of wood, brakes, or thickets; as the name would imply, if derived from *Pau*, a region or country, and *Brôg*, a brake or thicket; that is, *Pau Brôg*, thicket country; or, compounded, *Peuvrog*, braky region; *Y-Beuvgrog*, the braky region: thence the inhabitants would be denominated *Y-Beuvgrogwys*, *Peuvrogi*, *Peuvrogiad*, *Peuvrogwyr*, and *Gwyr Pau Brôg*. The other name of Rhemi is nearly of the same import.

IV.—The *ATTREBATES* occupied nearly all the western coast of Berkshire ; were bounded by the Lodden on the south-east, the curving bank of the Thames on the north-west and west, and the hills of East Ilsley, Lambourne, and Ashbury, on the south ; and had Calleva, or Wallingford, for their chief city.

Their name is thus to be accounted for : *Attrev*, and *Attrevad*, describe a habitation bordering upon any range of hills, woods, or a river ; which was the case with respect to this people. Their country being so denominated, they would call themselves *ATTREVATI*, Attreviaid, &c.

V.—The *SEGONTIACI* inhabited a little of the south of Berkshire, west of the Lodden, about the banks of the Kennet, and the adjoining North of Hampshire ; and their principal town was *Vindomis*, *Vindonum*, or Silchester. It seems that their country was called *Isgwent*, *Isgwentog*, that is, the *lower Venta* : the people called themselves *Isgwenti*, *Isgwentiaid*, *Isgwentogi*, and *Isgwentiogi* ; all implying the *lower Gwentians*, distinguished from the proper country of *Gwent*, which was occupied by the Belgæ.

VI.—The *BELGÆ* had all Hampshire, except the northern part, occupied by the *Segontiaci* ; and all Wiltshire, save a small district on the north-west ; and had *Venta Belgarum*, *Caer Went*, or Winchester, for their capital : and their country was the proper *Gwent*, or *Y Went*, a name descriptive of the open downs with which it abounded.

This people being recently come over to Britain, and differing considerably in their manners and language from the other tribes, the Romans distinguished all the inhabitants of Britain under the two divisions of Aborigines

and Belgæ. The former had migrated from the continent at different times, in the first ages of the population of Europe; and were the unmix'd *Cymbrians*. The Belgæ began to come over nearly three centuries before Cæsar's invasion, and were likewise of the Cymbric origin; but had necessarily been neighbours for a long time to the Teutonic nations, and must have consequently undergone a considerable degree of intermixture.

The meaning of the name *Belgæ* seems to be preserved in the Welsh: *Belg* implies that which breaks out, makes irruption, or ravages; so *Belgau*, *Belgiaid*, *Belgwyr*, *Belgwys*, might be rendered irruptors, depredators, ravagers, or warriors.

VII.—The *DUROTRIGES*, or *Morini*, lived in Dorsetshire; and had *Durinum*, *Durnovaria*, or Dorchester, for their capital.

Both these names are purely Welsh, and of the same meaning nearly; as the former implies dwellers on the water, that is, *Durodrigwys*, from *dwr*, water, and *trigo*, to abide, or dwell; and the other was *Morini*, the maritime; from *morin*, maritime, and the common plural termination for people: or the name might be also formed *Moriniaid*, *Morinwyr*, &c. They might also be called *Dwrini*, *Dwriniaid*, *Dwrinion*, and *Dwrinwys*; and their capital might be named *Caer Dwrin*, *Din Dwrin*, and *Dwrin Ewyr*, which would account for the two appellations of *Durinum* and *Durnovaria*.

VIII.—The *Hædvi* had all Somersetshire to the estuary *Uxella*, Bridgwater bay, or the river Ivel, on the south; the south-west of Gloucestershire, to the hills of Wotton-Under-Edge; and the north-west of Wiltshire, to the Avon and Creekklade.

The Welsh now call the country of this people *Gwlad*

Their language, or the *Gwenhwyseg*, was one of the three principal dialects of Wales, and perhaps the most ancient: in it are written most of our oldest manuscripts, some of which are very valuable.

II.—The *DIMETÆ* inhabited Pembrokeshire, *Pembro Dywed*, or the proper *Dimetia*; Gower, now a part of Glamorganshire; and the whole of the counties of Caermarthen, Brecon, and Cardigan: and Muridunum, *Caer-tyrddin* or Caermarthen was their capital.\*

The Welsh name for the country comprehended in the above-mentioned limits is *Deheubarth*, or the south country; a name now generally applied to all the country called South Wales, as distinguished from the six counties of North Wales.

The name of *DYVED*, according to Mr. Owen, (whom I suppose to be the author of the Historical Sketch,) implies a region abounding with waters or streams; and it is very applicable to Pembrokeshire, as the country extends into the seas, and Milford Haven likewise divides it nearly through the middle.†

Although that name was synonymous with *Syllwg*, or *Siluria*, in the more confined sense: I do not know that it was applied equally to Radnorshire and Herefordshire.

\* Camden, and other antiquaries, were accustomed to consider Brecknockshire as pertaining to *Siluria*; but the ingenious author of the *History of Brecknockshire*, as well as Mr. Owen, has decided that his native country was a part of the ancient *Dimetia*. To judge according to the geographical situation, as well as the similarity of appearance in the country at large, it seems a natural conclusion, that a considerable part of Brecknockshire on the east, or perhaps all the lower region of it, as well as Radnorshire, must have formed a part of *Siluria*.

† The propriety of such an explication of the appellation *Dywed* may not forcibly strike every reader; although it may, in some degree, apply to the county of Pembroke itself. Some particular trait in the

The people may be called *DYFENI*, *Dyvedwyr*, &c. ; or *Gwyr Dyved*, and *Dyveidwys*.

III.—The name of *ORDOVICES* was that by which the inhabitants of a principal part of the present North Wales were known to the Romans ; they had most of Shropshire, and perhaps of Radnorshire, and a great part of Cheshire.\*

The *Ordovices* are supposed to be so denominated in allusion to their mountainous situation ; as from the primitive words *OR* and *AR*, are formed *Gor*, *Gorth*, &c. ; and from *GOR* and *TAF*, are derived *Gordevig* and *Gordevin* ; and from *AR* and *TAF*, come *Ardevig*, *Ardevog*, and *Ardevin* ; all which words are descriptive of a high or upper region. But it is not improbable that they were called *Ord'uices*, or *Ord'uiccii*, to distinguish them from the *Huiccii*, or Worcestershire men.—See *Buxter's Glossary*, and *Whitaker*, Vol. I. cap. 5.

They would probably denominate their country *Bro-Ordevig*, and themselves *Godevigiaid*, *Gardevigion*, *Gordevigwyr*, *GORDEVIGWYS*, &c. The *g* is lost frequently in certain positions, as *Wele Ordevigwys* : or *Dyma Ordevigwys*.

This people make a division of their territory into two departments ; that of *Gwynedd*, which embraced the most westerly and mountainous regions ; and *Powys*, which,

face of nature, or some circumstance in very ancient treaties, or perhaps something marking the character of the people, may have given rise to the appellations by which the various tribes were distinguished. But, in many instances, it is extremely difficult now to decide, with any precision, on the force of these ancient names ; and so particularly in respect to *Syllwg* and *Dyved*.

\* The people of Carnarvonshire were called *Cangi*, or *Cangani*, and their chief town was *Segontium*, or *Caer Segont*, near the present *Caernarvon*. They had also *Caer Rhun*, near *Conway*.

in general, was more of an open country, comprising great part of Denbighshire and Flintshire, with Montgomeryshire, Radnorshire, and part of Shropshire. If such a division existed before the coming over of the Romans, then Radnorshire ought to be considered as pertaining to the Ordovices, rather than the Silures.

The name of *Venedotia* has been given to North Wales as an equivalent to *Gwynedd*.

The language of the people of this country appears to have always formed a dialect differing from that spoken in the other two territories, as before-mentioned. If we judge from the state of the Cambro-British tongue, as existing in old manuscripts, the North-Walian dialect has not that claim to a very remote antiquity and purity, to which it has been supposed to have an exclusive title. The Silurian dialect was in the time of the Roman period, and for some time after, in all probability, the most pure and simple in its structure, as well as the best cultivated; but various circumstances, during the middle ages, gave to the people of North Wales, the advantage of retaining their language in greater purity.



#### FLAVIA CÆSARIENSIS.

I.—The *TRINOVANTES* resided in the counties of Middlesex and Essex; *Londinium*, *Lundain*, *Tre Lundain*, or London, was their chief town: *Camalodunum*, or Colchester, also pertained to them.

The *Trinovantes* were so denominated from their situation on the great expanse of water, or lake, formed by the Thames; as were the *Novantes*, in Scotland, from their dwelling in the peninsula and headland of Galloway. With respect to the *Trinovantes*, the prefix was



perhaps originally *tra*, ultra or beyond ; the *inhabitants of the region beyond the water*. The country would bear the name of Tranovant ; but we have no reason to believe that their chief town bore that name, for the name of that town was *Lundain*, from which the Romans formed their *Londinium*.

II.—The *ICENI*, *Cenimagni*, *Cenomes*, *Cenomanni*, or *Cenimunni*, inhabited the counties of Cambridge, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Huntingdon ; perhaps the north of Bedfordshire, to the Ouse, and the south of Northampton, to the Nen : and *Venta Icenorum*, or Caster, near Norwich, was their chief town.

*Iceni*, or the *Ceni*, implies as much as the foremost, or the people who were a-head. Among the Britons they would be called *Cyni*, *Y Cyni*, &c ; that is, the first, or forward, or those placed farthest, or in the extremity ; alluding to the situation of the Norfolk men in particular. The other name, of *Cenimagni*, if given originally by the Romans, must apply to the principal branch of that people ; as much as to say, the great or principal *Ceni* : and this I think as likely as to suppose it ought to have been written *Cenimanni*, from *cyn*, principal, and *man*, a spot or region.

III.—The *CORITANI*, *Coitani* and *Corii*, the same undoubtedly as the *Coraniaid*, spoken of in the *Historical Triads*, being the first Belgic colony that intruded themselves on the Aboriginal inhabitants. They are said in the *Chronicle* to have come over in the time of *Lud*, the son of *Beli*.

The term *Coraniaid* may be derived from *Côr*, a sheep, intimating their being great shepherds ; and the country of which they gained possession was eminently adapted for grazing large flocks and herds. Or the word may be

derived from *Cawr*, a giant or great man, softened into *Côr* in their dialect, and signifying their great strength and prowess as a people. Some of them were called *Coitani*, from *coit*, a wood, on account of the large woods which they occupied. Their country was situated in that part of Northamptonshire not occupied by the *Icen*i, in Leicestershire, Rutlandshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, and Derbyshire. Their principal city was *Ragæ*, or Leicester; called also *Ratis Corion*, or more properly *Ratæ Corion*; that is, *Ratæ* of the *Corii*, or *Corani*; and *Llwyd Coet*, or Lincoln.

IV.—The *CASSII*, or *CATTI*, possessed all Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, up to the Nen on the north; and the adjoining parts of Buckinghamshire. This people were also called *Cutti-cuchlani*: the first name signifies warriors, and the other is descriptive of those who possessed the more elevated parts of the country.

Their principal town was *Verolam*, or St. Alban's; but, before the invasion of Cæsar, this warlike people extended their dominions, seized the kingdom of the *Trinobantes*, and the country of the *Dobuni*; so that the royal residence, in the time of Cassivelaunus, was at *Camalodunum*. It was owing to such an increase of power that this prince was enabled to make so formidable a stand against Cæsar; but the jealousy of his new subjects tended to weaken his force, and to betray the country.

V.—The *DOBUNI*, or *BODUNI*, derived their name, most probably, from the word *Dofn*, on account of the deep vallies which they inhabited. Mr. Whitaker conjectures that these *Lowlanders*, as their name imports, first of all possessed only the south of Gloucestershire, and had *Carinium*, or Cirencester, for their principal city; but afterwards they extended their authority over the north of

Gloucestershire, and the south-west of Warwickshire, over all the extent of Worcestershire, and Oxfordshire, and the remainder of Buckinghamshire; reaching up to the western front of the Cassii, and still retaining Corinium for their capital. But this is ascribing to them a greater extent of territory than is consistent with the claims of the Jugantes and Carnabii.

VI.—The *HUICCI*, or *JUGANTES*, had Gloucestershire, from the borders of the Dobuni northwards; and the whole, according to some, of Warwickshire, and nearly the whole of Worcestershire. These were, it would appear, subdued by the Dobuni, which gave that people the extent of territory above-mentioned. *Brano-genium*, or Worcester, or, as the Britons called it, *Caer Wrangon*, was their capital. The *HUICCI*, or *Gwychi*, signifies men of bravery. They might be called among themselves *Gwychiaid*, *Gwychion*, *Gwycheinti*, *Gwycheintwys*. In certain forms of construction the initials would be dropped; and then the affinity appears clearer between the Roman and the British terms: as—

*Dyna WYCHI*, there are *HUICCI*:

*Dyna Wycheintwys*, here are *JUGANTES*.

The name of *Huicci*, or *Vices*, Mr. Whitaker regards as a favourite appellation among the Britons; hence we have the *Ord-vices*, or *Ordovices*, the great *Vices*, a people whose dominion was, at one period, so large as to extend into Staffordshire and the east of Cheshire, as well as over North Wales: he even supposes that the same people had possession, at one time, of the country attributed to the Huicci, or Jugantes, which name he conjectures to have been their original one. However that may have been, they were subject to the Silures, in the time of Claudius, Caractacus being sovereign of both nations.

VII.—The *ANCALITES* had the eastern parts of the counties of Oxford and Buckingham, and bordered upon the Huiccii to the west.

The origin of this name, very probably, is supposed to be *UCHELITWYS*, or the inhabitants of the high grounds, for that was their situation, and were so distinguished from their neighbours the Dobuni, who dwelt in the dales. They might also be called *Uchelwyr*, *Uchelwys*, and *Gwyr yr Uchelion*.

VIII.—The *CORNAVII*, *CARNABII*, or *Corinavii*, inhabited (previous to the inroad of the Ordovices,) all Cheshire, and all Shropshire, on the north and east of the Severn; and all Staffordshire, with some of the adjacent borders of Warwickshire and Leicestershire: *Uriconium*, or Wroxeter, was their chief city.

The proper *Carnabii*, from their peculiar situation between the Dee and the Mersey, received a name similar to that borne by the inhabitants of Cornwall, who were also called *Carnabii*, because of their headland or promontory.

The eight nations above specified inhabited the Roman division of the island called *Flavia*, *Cæsariensis*, and *Flavia Cæsariensis*; having the Thames, and the hills of Wotton-Under-Edge, for its southern limit; the Severn on the west; and the Mersey, Don, and Humber, on the north.



#### *MAXIMA CÆSARIENSIS.*

I.—The *SETANTII*, *SISTUNTII*, or *Sistantii*, inhabited Lancashire, and the southern parts of Westmoreland;

having *Rhigodunum*, or Ribchester, and *Coccium*, or Blackrode, for their chief towns.

The name of this tribe, and of the *Volantii*, probably have reference to each other ; for it would seem that one occupied a fruitful soil, and chiefly followed agriculture, while the latter tended their flocks in the more hilly country. Agreeably to such a supposition, I make *Syddynt*, an agricultural farm, or tenement, to be the original of the appellation of the *Setantii* ; from which word the people would be called *SYDDYNTI*, *Syddyntiad*, *Syddyntion*, *Syddyntwyr*, and *Syddyntwys* ; importing the dwellers in farms, or those who cultivate the land.

II.—The *VOLANTII*, or *Voluntii*, possessed the northern parts of Westmoreland, and all Cumberland, to the wall of Hadrian on the north ; having *Volanty*, or Ellenborough, in the latter, for their capital.

In contradistinction to the *Setantii*, the *Volantii* were the people of the forests, deriving their name from *Gwyllant*, a region abounding with coverts, or wilds ; and hence they would have the appellation of *Gwyllleinti*, *Gwyllleintiaid*, &c. or *Gwyr-y-Gwyllaint*, the woodlanders. As the name has a mutable initial, it approaches nearer to *Volantii*, under some forms of construction, as—

Gweli *WYLLEINTI* yno,  
Thou wilt see *VOLANTII* there.

III.—The *BRIGANTES* possessed Yorkshire, to the Don and Humber, on the south and east ; all Durham ; and a little of Northumberland, lying south of the wall of Hadrian.

*Brigant*, from *Brig*, implies in the British a summit, or upper situation ; from which may be formed *Bri-*

*ganti, Brigantiaid, Brigantwyr, Brigantwys, and Gwyr Brigant.*

They had *Eboracum, Caer Eborac, Caer Ev'roc*, or York, for their capital; and it was esteemed the second city in Britain.

There is a kind of war dance still preserved among some of the Welsh, called *Chware Brigant*, the play of the Brigant.

Mr. Baxter will have it that this was the general appellation of the Britons in a very remote period, and derives the name from the *Phryges*, or *Briges*, of the continent.



#### VALENTIA.

I.—The *OTTADINI* possessed all Northumberland, except a small part to the south of the wall of Hadrian; all Lothian and Mers; and the half of Tweedale: their chief town was *Bremenium*, or Riechester.

*Aneurin*, called *Aneurin Gwawdrudd*, or *Aneurim* of flowing song, a celebrated Bard, and brother of Gildas, the dolorous historian, was a chieftain of this people in the sixth century. He wrote an elegy on account of a signal defeat sustained by his countrymen in the battle of *Cattraeth*, wherein he bore a conspicuous part himself. This piece, still extant, although in most copies greatly corrupted, is the longest poem in the Welsh language, but so obscure that the design of it is greatly disputed.\*

\* Mr. Edward Williams has given us a fine imitation of some stanzas of the Gododin; but the Rev. Edward Davies, in his *Mythology of the Druids*, has given an entirely different turn to the

Aneurin, with two of his friends, were the only men of note who survived that bloody affair; in consequence of which the Saxon power prevailed, and Aneurin retired into Wales, where he found a refuge with part of his family, who embraced a religious life, at Lancarvan, or Lautwit, in the Vale of Glamorgan; while another part of them took up their abode in the Isle of Anglesea.—See *Cambrian Biography*, p. 8.

The *Otadini*, or *Gododini*, or *Gododinwyr*, are names which imply a people bordering on the coverts. The initial of the word is mutable; so that, under a change of its form, it would be *Ododin Otadinia*, and *Ododinwyr Otadini*: as—

Gwyr a æth *ODODIN*, &c.

II.—The *GADENI* had the little of Cumberland lying north of the wall of Severus, Tiviotdale, Tweedale up to the Tweed, and Cluydisdale to Lanerk on the north-west: their first city was *Curia*, or Corsford, by Lanerk. This country is supposed to be the same as that referred to in old manuscripts, under the name of *Goddau*, or the Groves; and which might be called *Goddain*, and the people *Goddeini*.

III.—The *SELGOVÆ* inhabited Annandale, Nithisdale, and Galloway, to the Dee; and perhaps the south-east of Kyle, and south-west of Clydesdale. The name of this people is descriptive of their position in a country upon the dividing water; and it is the original from which Solway is to be traced. It is a compound from *Sall*, that branches out, separates or divides, and *Gwy*, a stream. These two radical words, uncompounded, would preserve

whole meaning and design of the work.—See his literal prose translation, in pp. 326—381.

the mutable initial of the latter; thus, *Sall Gwŷ*; but otherwise it would be written *Sallwy*: the first form accounts for the *g* in *Selgovæ*, and the other shews why it is not in *Solway*.

IV.—The *NOVANTES* possessed the whole of Galloway, lying west of the Dee.

The appellation of *Novant* is supposed to signify a situation abounding with streams, or in the water, and which is descriptive of the country of this people; and they themselves were called *Novanti*, *Novantiaid*, *Novantwys*, &c.

*Aneurin*, in his celebrated poem before noticed, makes mention of the Novantian chiefs and their forces, as being in the battle of Cattraeth.

V.—The *DAMNII* bordered on the north of the *Novantes*, *Selgovæ*, and *Gadeni*, being separated from them by a range of mountains; and they inhabited all Carrick, Cunningham, and Renfrew; and probably all the north and western parts of Kyle; and the north-east of Cluydisdale: the wall of Antoninus being their northern barrier.

The name of this people implies that they inhabited the deep vales, or glens, between mountains: it was identified in the British words *DYFNI*, *Dyfniaid*, &c. The root of these names is *Dywyn*, from which, in another form, is also derived the appellation of the *Damnonii*, or the men of Devonshire.

These nations went under the name of *Meatae*, as distinguished from the inhabitants of the country on the other side of the wall. Their principal cities were Curia, Bremenium, Corbantorigum or Kircudbright, Lucophibia or Withern, and Paisley.



*VESPASIANA.*

I.—The *HORESTII* inhabited Strathern, and the recesses of the neighbouring mountains of Perth, lying south of the Tay.

This people, Mr. Owen supposes, to derive their name from the strong position of their country, being the most inaccessible part of the Grampian mountains; for the word *hyrwest* signifies that easily or aptly hinders, that is easily defended, or an impregnable barrier: whence *Hyrwysti*, and *Hyrwystiaid*, the Horestii.

II.—The *VECTURONES* possessed all Perth, except the little portion lying south of the Tay; the whole of Gawry, Angus, and Merns; and the narrow region of Mar, south of the Dee.

There are several words in the British language which bear affinity to this name; as *Gwychyron*, brave ones, the original from which Mr. Whitaker derives the name; *Gwythyron*, men of wrath; *Peithyron*, men of the open or out country; and *Uchderon*, the inhabitants of the heights. But our antiquary rejects these appellations in favour of a country mentioned several times by Aneurin the bard, in his *Gododin*; as that name he perceives to be identified in the river Erne and Strathern. The name alluded to is *Aeron*, the original name of the river Erne, and of several other rapid foaming streams. The original situation of the *Vecturones* was above, beyond, or north of, that river; whence, accordingly, they would be called *Uchaeronwys*, *Ucharoni*, *Ucharoniaid*, &c.; that is, the men of Uchaeron, or of the region above the Aeron.

It must be admitted that *Peithyron*, or, as in certain forms, *Beithyron*, seems to be the British name for *Vecturones*. The root of that appellation seems to be *Paith*, signifying what is clear or open; hence comes the word *Peithi*, or *Picti*, according to Owen, denoting them to be the inhabitants of the open country; and this indeed agrees with their situation on the eastern coast of Scotland.

III.—The *TAXALI* inhabited all of Mar on the north of the Dee and Buchan.

This nation received their name from *Tachial*, which is interpreted to denote the terminating of the plain or open country; a name nearly equivalent to the fair headland: whence the inhabitants would be called *Tachiali*, &c.

IV.—The *VACOMAGI* had all *Bamff*, *Murray*, and *Inverness*, to the town of that name; nearly all *Badenoch* and *Argyle*; and the small part of *Braidalbin*, lying north of the *Tay*. It would appear that this people inhabited a chain of deep glens, extending across the island. It would there be appropriate enough to call them *Paucymogi*, *Paucymogiaid*, &c. and *Gwyr y Bau Gymog*, or the men of the country abounding with glens.

V.—The *ALBANI*, or *Damnii Albani*, were situated south of the *Vacomagi*, in the parts of *Athol* and *Braidalbin* lying south of the *Tay*, the north of *Strathern* and of *Monteith*.

The word *Alban* means a country of high peaks, or a mountainous district: hence the *ALBANI*, who would be called *Albaniaid*, *Albanwyr*, &c., according to the genius of the Welsh language.

Alban is the name by which the Welsh denote Scotland in general; and the Highlanders call themselves *Albanich*.

VI.—The *ATTACOTTI* inhabited about the extent of the present district of *Lenox*.

This nation probably dwelt on one of the extremities of *Coed Celyddon*, or the Caledonian forest; as if they were called *EITHA-COETI*, or *Eitha Coetiaid*, &c. implying the men of the extremity of the wood.

These nations were not long subject to the Roman empire, and were not at any time properly reduced into the form of a province.



### *The other Nations of CALEDONIA.*

I.—The *CALEDONI* inhabited the interior parts of Inverness, the western of Badenoch and of Braidalbin, the eastern of Lochaber and the north-east of Lorn.

The name given to the people of this district was applied also to all who inhabited the country beyond the wall of Antonine; and, in a more confined sense, to all who lived in the most northerly division.

The name of *Caledoni* appears to be the same with the Welsh name *Celyddon*, which means seclusions, or coverts. *Coed y Celyddon*, or the Caledonian forest, occurs in all Welsh writings very frequently. The people are called *Gwyr Celyddon*, men of the coverts, or woodlanders; they might also be called *Celyddoniaid*, and *Celyddoni*, or *Caledonians*.

The Highland antiquaries derive the word Caledonian from *Gael-don*, or the Gael of the hills; that is, Highlanders.

fierceness, their name might have been *Creun*, or *Creunwys*, the men of blood.

X.—The *EPIDII* inhabited Cantyre and Knapdale.

This people were so called from a word which, probably, was the name of their country, descriptive of its singular projection into the sea. The word which I allude to is *Ebyd*, implying, as Mr. Owen says, a going from, a passing off, or running out ; and therefore applicable to the country of Cantyre. The *b* and *p* being frequently changed into each other in the British, the inhabitants of the *Ebyd*, or Peninsula, would be called *Ebydi*, *Ebydion*, &c. ; as well as *Epidi*, *Epydion*, &c.

This completes the catalogue of the several principal tribes, who originally, or at least in very ancient times, inhabited Britain, according to the best information the Romans were able to procure. It was by colonies from some of these nations that Ireland became peopled ; and chiefly from such as occupied the western shores : these, in general, preserved their original appellations, or other names of the same import. In Ireland, it is worthy to observe, the Belgæ, who arrived there in subsequent periods, formed a distinct body of people from the first colonists, until they subdued them ; and then these two leading distinctions gradually ceased to exist ; and the peculiarities which formed the *Belgic* dialect of the *Cymbric* language became prevalent amongst all the inhabitants of that island.

*The principal Towns in Britain ; several of which were founded before the coming over of the Romans.*

*Trenovant*—Londinium, Llandain, Llundain, or London.

*Durovernum vel Cantiopolis*—Caer Gaint, or Canterbury.

*Camulodunum*—Colchester, or Maldon.

*Verolamium*—St. Alban's.

*Venta*—(Belgarum), Caer Wynt, Winchester.

*Isca*—(Damnoniorum), Caer Esk, Exeter.

*Isca*—(Silurum), Caerleon, Monmouthshire.

*Venta*—(Silurum), Caerwent.

*Glevum*—Caer Gloyw, Gloucester.

*Brannogenium*—Caer Wrangon, Worcester.

*Uriconium*—Wroxeter, in Shropshire.

*Deva*—Caerleon Gawr, Chester.

*Corinium*—Caer Ceri, or Cirencester.

*Durnomagus*—Caster, near Peterborough.

*Cataracton*—or Catterick, Yorkshire.

*Victoria*—Perth.

*Theodosia*—Caer Alcluyd, or Dunbritton.

*Cambodunum*—Slack, in Lancashire.

*Isurium*—Aldborough, Yorkshire.

*Eboracum*—Caer Evroc, or York.

*Coccium*—Blackrode.

*Luguballium*—Caerlisle.

*Cambodunum*—Slack, Lancashire.

*Segontium*—Caer Segont, near Caernarvon.

*Conovium*—Caer Hên, near Conway.

*Mediolanum*—Meivod, Montgomeryshire.

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# HORÆ BRITANNICÆ;

OR,

Studies in Ancient British History.

PART THE SECOND.

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*Preliminary remarks.—The origin of Polytheism  
and Idolatry.*

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**T**HE Polytheism of the Heathen world, although promoted by various means, and to be traced to a variety of subordinate causes, must be ultimately referred to one, as its grand primeval source; the darkness of the human mind, and the disorder of its affections, in consequence of the fall of the first man. Mankind refused to retain the knowledge of the true God, the infinitely just and good; and having once lost sight of the First Great Cause of all, their foolish hearts wandered from one invention to another, to find a substitute for the loss of truth and the Supreme Good. They set up for themselves systems of Religion; which, under that sacred name, became a sanction for vice and aensuality.

The works of the Creator, instead of the Creator Himself, soon became the objects of religious veneration with fallen

man. In the extravagant admiration of those who had conferred benefits on the world, or were any way remarkable for their achievements, the commemoration of those heroes degenerated into idolatry.

The heavenly bodies were among the earliest objects of idolatrous worship; although, according to the opinion of some eminent writers, not earlier than the worship of departed heroes. Mankind being led more by passion than abstraction, there appears some foundation on which to ground this latter opinion.

But whatever were the earliest objects of idolatrous veneration, they were, in the first instance, rather associated with the true God, than set up in opposition to His worship.

Idolatry, we may conceive to be the great abomination, by which all flesh had so far corrupted its way; that the whole world, with the reserve of one family, were become so obnoxious to the Divine displeasure, that mankind were swept away from off the earth by an universal deluge.

Among the descendants of Noah, the knowledge of the true God, and the remembrance of His marvellous works, was retained for some ages after the flood, among certain families of the posterity of Shem and Japheth: but the generality of the Postdiluvians soon degenerated into idolatry, forsaking that great and righteous Being, whose worship was too pure for minds so gross and sensual.

Certain symbols or hieroglyphics were adopted in the earliest ages of the world, to assist the conceptions of mankind in sacred matters; but these were easily perverted into instruments of superstition. Those who were addicted to contemplation, gave themselves up to abstract reasonings, and refined speculations; and by taking upon them to be endued with superior knowledge as to the se-



cret operations of nature, and the mysteries of religion, they led the common people astray.

“The veil of secrecy under which the ancient priests and philosophers,” to use the words of an ingenious author, “delivered their doctrines and injunctions in the use of symbols and allegories, gave rise to abuses of very pernicious consequence. The truth was concealed from the eyes and the ears of the people; who, consequently, soon began to mistake the shadow for the substance, and to perceive a multitude of gods, where only the various relations and operations of one God, and the phenomena and changes of nature, were originally intended. This popular delusion, it was the sedulous study of the priests to promote to the uttermost.”

In studying the works of nature, the sages of antiquity, not being able to comprehend the sublime idea of one Eternal Being, the Maker and Preserver of all things, began to conceive the notion of a multiplicity of divinities presiding over the various provinces of nature. Thus the works of creation seemed to conceal their Divine Author, rather than to display Him to mankind; who failed “to look through nature up to nature’s God.”

The noble science of Astronomy by degrees led to the solar idolatry; the great regent of the day soon became the principal object of heathen worship, under a variety of names, in all countries of the world. The worship of the lesser luminary, the pale planet that rules the night, could not fail to follow that of the greater light that rules the day.

The situation of some countries would easily lead the contemplative observer to consider the sun as the great symbol of the Deity, and then to worship him instead of the Deity Himself. The other heavenly luminaries might soon appear, to the deluded mind of man, to be endued with divinity.

The history of the deluge was handed down from father to son for many generations, and conveyed with mankind in their dispersions through all the world; but the rites whereby that wonderful event was commemorated were perverted into a fruitful source of idolatry. The patriarch Noah, his sons, the ark, and the renovated globe, all became the object of idolatrous veneration. That such rites were practised among all nations, and formed the grand basis of their mythology, in conjunction with the worship of the heavenly bodies, has been ably and clearly proved, by writers of considerable eminence, with respect to Egypt, Assyria, and India, Greece, Italy, Thrace, and the British Isles.

Agriculture and navigation were, both of them, arts in which ancient nations made but a slow progress; but as the one and the other were of vast importance to human society, those who were famed for their skill either in ploughing the seas, or cultivating the earth, became the objects of admiration. The peculiar situation of Egypt, from the circumstance of the overflowing of the Nile, rendered it necessary to have recourse to geometry to mark out the boundaries of individual property; every thing connected with the Nile, and whatever was conducive to the fertility of the country, was deemed sacred. It is from thence that the Abbé Pluche has accounted for Egypt being the nurse of superstition, and the cradle of idolatry, to almost all countries.

Every nation and people have had their Vates or sacred Poets, their sages or wise men, as well as their Priests who presided over their religious rites, and officiated at the altars. Poetry, in very early times, was the form in which historical annals were preserved: it was the delightful mode of conveying instruction on all subjects, whether the studies of nature, or the knowledge of law, religion, and ethics. In process of time the truth of history was vio-

lated, and the poet learned to personify abstract qualities, or the mere fictions of his own imagination. Music, in connexion with poetry, formed the silken bands, which, with magic art, bound the people in the fetters of superstition. By the help of geometry, the philosopher was enabled to dress up the arcana of his lore in an enigmatical form, and to convey it in mysterious characters to his disciples, to be understood by them alone; while the ignorant and profane vulgar, were left to admire the profound knowledge of their sages.

The ancient heathen had their mysteries or sacred shows, in which certain persons, considered worthy of that honour, were admitted to know the hidden meaning of various things in their mythology or sacred fables. The Eleusinian mysteries, or those of Ceres, were the most celebrated among the Greeks; and these were derived from similar representations among the priests of *Isis* in Egypt. Whether the nature of one God was there revealed, or the doctrine of a future state was there set forth, or what principles were there inculcated, the learned are not agreed.\* We shall presently find that the ancient Britons had something similar to these mysteries among them.

The pretensions which the priests, and their vates or augurs, made to the knowledge of future events, by means of certain rites of superstition, gave them unbounded influence, not only over the common people, but even persons of the highest rank and consequence. The appearance of the entrails of the sacred victims, the flight of birds, and other trifling incidents, furnished them with lucky and unlucky omens, according to which important undertakings were to be prosecuted or abandoned.

\* See Warburton's *Divine Legation of Moses*, Vol. I. and Faber on the *Cabyri*.

Mankind in a rude state of society are more easily influenced by imagination than reason ; and even, in a better state of things, passion too often gains the ascendancy over sound judgment ; and specious errors have greater force to attract weak minds than truth itself. If interest and self-gratification step in, it is not in man to forego present advantage, and the pleasures of to-day, for the mere love of virtue. Human nature is easily induced to adopt the theory that sanctions vice, and flatters us in our darling pursuits. From this cause it arises, that we find such a multiplicity of divinities, without number and without end. The superstitions of mankind have been always marked with the strongest tincture of the vain pursuits, or corrupt propensities, of their votaries. Sensuality and frivolity, haughtiness and cruelty, the lust of power or of wealth, or whatever was the ruling passion, decided the object of superstitious veneration. The debauchee and the strumpet, as well as the warrior and the statesman, had their altar at which they presented their votive offerings. Thus religion, or the worship of the gods, became the sanction of wickedness, and the consecration of impure desires and criminal pursuits.

The priest was the intercessor of the people with the Deity ; and, when offences were committed, sacrifice was to be offered to appease and make atonement for the guilt contracted. This custom may be traced to the remotest antiquity among all nations, in confirmation of the accounts of the sacred history. People made their offerings of those things which they deemed the most dear and precious ; and hence, on certain solemn occasions, human victims were offered on the altar. The doctrine of expiation, thus horribly perverted, became an engine of tremendous effect among a rude and infatuated people, in the hands of a tyrannical priesthood.

The calls of benevolence, the love of our country,

and the support of true religion, seldom influence the mind to that degree, or operate so extensively on the affections of man, as superstition or false religion. But it should be remembered, that certain principles are recognized under the gloom of superstition, true in themselves, however capable of being perverted. Among these are the superintendence of a Deity, a future state, honouring God with our worldly substance, and the necessity of an expiation for human guilt. These principles, inculcated by true religion, have the most powerful, and when properly applied, the most consoling effect, upon the human mind; and excite to the noblest actions. Even superstition is, upon the whole, preferable to infidelity. A superstitious people are to be pitied; but a nation of infidels would be a nation of monsters. The doctrine of atonement, however perverted, is one of the great truths founded on the nature of the Divine government, and the state of man: but as the abuse of the most important and salutary truths, leads to the most awful results; so there was no doctrine, which had a more unhappy effect in the ancient world, than the doctrine of vicarious punishment misapprehended, and then misapplied. It was thus among all the heathen; and among none more so, than our British ancestors.

*The Nature and Origin of Druidism.*

WE shall find, upon examination, the same leading principles of superstition or false religion, among the Gauls and Britons as among other nations; whose history can be traced to their first rude and simple annals. But the religion and manners of our ancestors, presents to us an appearance so different from that of the polished Greeks and Romans, that we are apt to consider them as having every thing peculiar to themselves, and at variance with all other nations.

The priests and sages of our ancestors went under the name of Druids; and with them the Bards and Ovates were intimately connected, and in many respects blended. The names are to this day retained among the mountains of Wales; and there are persons now living, who have much to say respecting the distinctions of each class: but we can hardly suppose that those distinctions, made out so nicely, and discriminating with such exactness, can be referred back to the remote period of which we are speaking.

The leading class of this order, in ancient times, appears to have been that of the Druid, the functions of religion being his peculiar province; and, owing to the influence which his sacred character gave him, the office as well as the honours of magistracy were in the same person annexed to that of the priesthood. It was so among other ancient nations: Æneas found king Evander offering sacrifice in a grove; and in times more ancient and more pure, King Melchisedec was priest of the Most High God, and the Emir Abraham himself officiated at the altar.

The Bards are principally recognized as poets; but

in order to be such, it was necessary for them to be well versed in what literature was attainable in their age and country. The Bard made himself acquainted with the laws, usages, and customs of the country, and the pedigrees of family and kindred ; but to be skilfully versed in the language of his forefathers, and a master in harmonic composition, was peculiarly essential to his profession.

The name of Bardism, is that used among the Welsh of the middle ages, to designate all the science, traditions, and peculiarities, of the order ; and he who is a complete graduate, is *Bard*, *Druid*, and *Ovate* : but his general and appropriate title is *Bardd braint*, or privileged Bard, for he is a Bard according to the privilege and institutions of the Bards of the isle of Britain.

But as it would be a kind of anachronism, to enter at present on the state of Bardism in its more advanced age, we defer any further remarks on that head.

The *Ovate* was the disciple or candidate, and devoted more particularly to the study of nature ; skill in botany, in an especial manner, was required from him, for the purposes of medicine and of magic. He assisted the priest in the celebration of religious rites, and especially in the business of augury and divination. The Bard and the Ovate played upon instruments of music, accompanied with the voice, while the Druid offered up the victim on the altar. Their sacrifices, according to the general custom of other heathens, were succeeded by a feast ; and there they celebrated the feats of their heroes, and sang the noble deeds of their ancestors.

The institution of Druidism must have been of very remote antiquity, as to the leading principles of the system. The patriarchal lore, or the original traditions, communicated by the Noachidæ to their descendants, would be best retained among a rude and simple people. Hence, the Britons retained a knowledge of certain

truths, and practised rites, derived from the early fathers of their race ; hence also, so striking a resemblance between them and the Persian magi, the Indian brahmins, and the priests of Orpheus in Thrace.

The Triads attribute the regulation of Bardic institutes to the age of Prydain, the son of Aedd, the first sovereign of the primordial Britons ; or, at least, to Du'nwal Moelmud.

The three first Bards who were endowed with legal privileges were *Plennydd*, *Alon*, and *Gwron* ; names implying *light*, *harmony*, and *energy*. These are designed to convey to us, agreeably to their import, the original tendency of the institution ; to enlighten the understanding, promote harmony in society, and to encourage fortitude or virtue. Much to the same effect the same design is declared in the institutional Triads published by Mr. Edward Williams—"The three ultimate intentions of bardism : to reform the morals and customs, to maintain peace, and to commend every thing good and excellent.\*"

"Druidism then, in its primitive and pure state," says Mr. Davies, "may be regarded as an edifice raised upon the basis of the patriarchal religion, for the purpose of superseding the necessity of recourse to arms, in the contentions of independent states, by suggesting laws which had their sanction in general opinion, and by teaching its votaries to expect, in a future state, a just recompense of their actions ; an apprehension which might serve to regulate their conduct in the present life. A system thus constructed," adds our author, "probably attained its meridian prevalence at an early age, and among the first civilized colonies of the Cymry."



...diben Barddoniaeth ; Gwellhau moes a devod ; cynnal  
...a moli pob daionus a rhagor.



“ Such a theory,” as the same author observes, “ could not long be maintained ; justice and necessity would be pleaded for having recourse to arms, on the intrusion of strangers, for self-defence ; and then the purity of the system would be tarnished. This was the case long before the Roman invasion ; but even then it was preserved among the Cymry of the interior in a far purer state than on the continent. As a proof of this latter point, we are told by Cæsar, that those among the Gauls, who wished to be thoroughly initiated into the mysteries of Druidism, resorted to Britain. As to the former, Pomponius Mela assures us, that the following were Druidical dogmas, seemingly constituting a triad :—

The exercise of bravery in battle,  
The immortality of the soul,  
The existence of a future state.

“ Diogenes Laertius also notices, that one of their maxims was to exercise fortitude ; the other two clauses of the Triad were, to worship the gods, and to abstain from evil.”

A very striking similarity has been observed to exist between the Druids of Britain and the sages of the East ; and in particular the Persian magi, and the brahmins of India. This is not a fanciful conjecture ; but has a real foundation to rest upon, according to the truth of history and minute observation. Mr. Maurice has thrown considerable light on this topic, in the sixth volume of his *Indian Antiquities*.

If we carry our views far back into remote ages, we shall be able to account for this coincidence subsisting between nations living in different hemispheres of our globe.

For the illustration of this subject, as well as its con-

nection with another, that is the symbolical mode of instruction which pervaded the ancient world. I shall present the Reader with an extract from Dr. Enfield's *History of Philosophy* :

"It was one of the offices," says the doctor, "of the Celtic priests, or Druids, to explain to their disciples the meaning of the fables under which their religious tenets were concealed. These fables, or allegories, were similar to those of the Asiatics, and were delivered in verse after their manner ; a circumstance which confirms the conjecture that these nations arose from colonies which came from the northern regions of Asia ; and which brought with them the tenets which, in the remotest periods, had prevailed among the Persians, Scythians, and other Asiatic nations. Indeed, it is probable that the Celts and Sarmatians in Europe, and the Medes and Persians in Asia, were derived from one common stock, the Asiatic Scythians : for, on the one hand, it appears that the name of Scythians, which remained in the northern part of Asia, passed over with the Scythian colonies into Europe, where it was gradually lost in those of Sarmatians and Germans ; and, on the other hand, authorities are not wanting to prove that the Medes and Persians were descended from the Scythians." The doctor here refers to *Herodotus*, lib. v. cap. 9., and to *Ammianus Marcellinus*, lib. xxxi. cap. 23. He then adds : "The same religious tenets which the Persians had received from the Scythians, were probably also embraced by the Celts, and by them transmitted, in their migrations, through Germany, Gaul, and Spain."

This hypothesis, advanced by Dr. Enfield, (or rather by Brunker,) will not be found to vary materially from that of the author of *Indian Antiquities* ; that the original Druids, anciently established in this country, were immediate descendants of a tribe of Brahmins, situ-

ated in the high northern latitudes, bordering on the vast range of Caucasus : that these, during that period of the Indian empire, when its limits were most extended in Asia, mingling with the Celto-Scythian tribes, who tenanted the immense deserts of Grand Tartary, became gradually incorporated, though not confounded, with that ancient nation ; introduced among them the rites of the Brahmin religion, occasionally adopting those of the Scythians ; and, together with them, finally emigrated to the western regions of Europe.

But, whatever traditions and first principles the early British settlers may have brought over with them, Druidism is stated to have been first raised into a system in Britain. But as our remote ancestors were, through the medium of the Gauls and the Iberians, descended from Celto-Scythian tribes ; the Sages, afterwards called Druids, may have derived their origin from the Brahmins of northern Asia ; and these were perhaps of the same school as the Thracian Bards. Their tenets were then simple, and their religious rites but few ; but, in process of time, the Brahminical religion became blended with the mythology of Egypt ; and the Druids of Britain received a tincture of Phœnician rites from the Punic colonies settled in Spain.

*The names of Druid, Ovate, and Bard.*

THE name of the *Druid* is derived, by foreign writers, from  $\Delta\rho\upsilon\varsigma$ , the oak ; and the word *Derwydd*, or *Darwydd*, the British term, in a similar manner, from *Derw*, or rather *Dar*, the male oak. But it is as probable that the oak received its name from its sacredness among the ancients, and that from an extravagant admiration of the superiority of that noble tree the pride of the forest. *Darwydd* may, therefore, signify the superior sage ; or, if the former idea be preferred, the sage of the oak. *Ovydd*, (the Ovate, or Vates,) signifies the inferior sage, candidate, or assistant. The word *Gwydd*,\* signifying that which is lofty or pre-eminent, is applied to the top branches of trees : and here, in the words *Dar-wydd* and *O-vydd*, or *Go-wydd*, means a *sage*, or wise man ; the first word in the former distinguishing him from the disciple, or probationer.

The Druid priest wore a white robe, and the Bard sky-blue, but the Ovate green. These different colours were, the first, the emblem of purity and peace ; the other, of truth ; and the last, the verdant dress of nature, in the meads and woods.

The Dryades, and Hama-Dryades, a kind of wood-nymphs, creatures of fiction, were originally meant to designate a sort of Druids, the name being evidently derived from  $\Delta\rho\upsilon\varsigma$ , the oak.

We have the name *Druw* in the West of England ; as at *Stanton-Druw*, or *Drew*, in Somersetshire ; and at

\* Taliesin says, Bum *Gwydd* yngwarthan.

*Redruth*; which, no doubt, was originally called *Tre'r Druw*, or Druid'ston.

The word *Druw* formed the plural *Druidion*; as in the village of *Cerrig y Druidion*, or the Druids' stones, in Denbighshire. The smallest of our birds, the Wren, is ludicrously called the *Druw*, or the little Druid, from its residence among the woods.

As to the term *Bard*, it may be derived from *BAR*, (*furor poeticus*) or from the Hebrew באר *BAR*, to open, declare, or make evident. *Bar* enters into the composition of several words, and especially the names of mountains. Mr. Owen derives the name from *Bar*, elevated or conspicuous. But if the name in very ancient times denoted a priest, as an ingenious antiquary intimates, then the *Bard* was the priest of the high places, and the *Druid* was the priest of the grove. This accounts for the Bards excelling in musick and poetry; as they were the votaries of Apollo, who represented the sun, and was worshipped on the summit of hills and mountains.

*The honourable Rank of the Druids.*

THIS order of men were in the greatest fame for their knowledge ; and, being the ministers of religion, and frequently, if not generally, exercising the highest offices in the community, their power and influence could not fail of being very extensive. The account given by Cæsar abundantly confirms this. According to the great Roman, the Druids had not only the charge of the public sacrifices, and the various ceremonies of religion ; but to them the education of youth was entrusted. They presided in the courts of justice, and all litigated causes were brought before them. In all causes, both criminal and civil, their decision was final ; and if any person, however eminent, refused to abide by their sentence, he was interdicted the public sacrifices, and treated as an outlaw ; his society was shunned, he was denied the common rights of a citizen, and could not be entrusted with any post of honour.

The Druids had one of their number, who presided over the nation or district ; and this was probably the chief justice, as well as the high priest. They held their courts on some elevated situation : such was *Carn Bre*, for the West of England ; and such perhaps was *Stanton Drew*, in Somersetshire ; *Twŷn Barlom*, in Monmouthshire ; *Bwlch yr Allor*, (the pass of the altar,) in Brecknockshire. There is also *Cerrig y Druidion*, (of like import with Stanton Drew,) in Denbighshire ; and in the parish of Lanidan, in Anglesea, the ancient Mona, the place of the Arch-Druid's court is shewn.

But the place of greatest note, both as to antiquity and dimensions, was Abury ; which is, doubtless, of greater

antiquity than even Stonehenge. Perhaps it was the former that, in a very remote age, was the Areopagus of Britain ; or, as our ancestors would denominate it, *Bryn Gwyddon*. *Caer Emrys*, or Stonehenge, was probably erected afterwards, on account of some schism in the Druidical body, or to answer more the design of a temple ; and to be frequented on great festivals, and occasions of general convention.

Cæsar describes a noted place in the centre of Gaul, on the borders of Chartres, where the Druids held their high court of judicature, or general convention, which assembled annually : thither the people flocked from all quarters, as to a grand tribunal, where all disputes were submitted to the judgment of the Druids, from whose decisions there was no appeal.

The youth, who aspired to be initiated into the arcana of Druidism, had to undergo a long probation : some were twenty years under tuition ; and, during that time, the maxims of wisdom or of superstition, inculcated on their minds, were communicated in verse. This was a very ancient mode of instruction ; and we have the most beautiful sentiments conveyed in the golden verses attributed to Pythagoras ; which, although not actually composed by that philosopher, lead to the supposition that he was accustomed to impart the precepts of wisdom in verse.

The Druids studied in the school of nature ; cosmogony and astronomy exercised their prying minds ; and they were perhaps as well acquainted with physiology, or natural philosophy, as most men in those remote ages. They also held many disputations respecting the Divine nature, as well as the structure of the universe and the laws of nature. As to their ethics, we have some remains, which are attributed to them : if these cannot be traced so far back as the first ages of British antiquity,

The magicians pretended to discover the peculiar powers, and secret virtues, in a variety of herbs and plants; but these were not to be extracted but by means of certain rites, which they alone were deemed qualified to exercise. Thus, by the knowledge they possessed from observation and experience, common effects proceeding from natural causes were, through the ignorance of the multitude, magnified into supernatural ones.

“Medicinal botany,” says Whitaker, “originally the only branch of medicine, was grafted on the stock of the Celtic religion; for the Druids of the Gauls and Britons were at once their physicians and priests. The magic rites, which were practised with so wild a solemnity in our own island, were merely the mixed effusions of medicine and superstition; each acting upon the other, and both heightening the whole. Magic, as Pliny justly observes, was nothing more in its origin than the daughter of medicine, calling out the secret powers of nature in the vegetable creation, and yet concealing their agency under the mantle of religion.”—*History of Manchester*, 8vo. Vol. II.

There were four kind of herbs in particular, which the Druids held in high repute; the vervain, the samolus, the selago, and the misletoe of the oak. Pliny has given us certain particulars respecting the gathering of the misletoe, which was held in great veneration. It was to be gathered on the sixth day of the moon, at the approach of the new year, or the autumnal equinox: this was performed with great ceremony; for the plant was cut off the oak on which it grew by one of the chief Druids, with a golden hook, and received in a white vestment. At that time two white bulls were sacrificed to their supreme Divinity.



*Their Doctrines.*

THE Druids are said to have been strenuous advocates for the immortality of the soul; but, like many other heathens, although they held the soul to be imperishable, their doctrine on that subject involved in it the notion of the *Metempsychosis* or transmigration, which prevailed almost universally in the East. The celebrated Pythagoras, one of the first among the Greeks who systematically asserted the immortality of the soul, embraced that doctrine; and an eminent divine has given it as his opinion that one great design of the Book of Job is to controvert that absurd and erroneous tenet.\* Pythagoras discoursed with the sages of the East and of the West; and he found the Metempsychosis believed by the one and the other. That so curious a coincidence should exist in this, as well as many other tenets, between the Druids of Britain and Gaul, and the Brahmins of India, is not a little curious; and proves that these both had, at some remote period, studied in the same school.†

According to this notion of the transmigration, when a man died, his immortal part animated a different body; and if he were doomed to punishment, that punishment consisted in his occupying the body of some brute, and thus passing through a kind of purgatory, until he should once more take possession of the human form; and, after various migrations, he was to be made ultimately happy.

\* See Worthington's *Thoughts on the Book of Job*, annexed to his ingenious work on Redemption.

† See the sixth book of *Indian Antiquities*, where this subject is discussed at large.

Lucan has beautifully described the Druid doctrine respecting a future state ; and he is elegantly translated by Rowe :—

“ If dying mortals doom they sing aright,  
 No ghosts descend to dwell in dreadful night :  
 No parting souls to grisly Pluto go,  
 Nor seek the dreary silent shades below :  
 But forth they fly, immortal in their kind,  
 And other bodies in new worlds they find :  
 Thus life for ever runs its endless race,  
 And, like a line, death but divides the space ;  
 A stop which can but for a moment last,  
 A point between the future and the past.  
 Thrice happy they, beneath their northern skies,  
 Who that worst fear, the fear of death, despise :  
 Hence they no cares for this frail being feel,  
 But rush undaunted on the pointed steel ;  
 Provoke approaching fate, and bravely scorn  
 To spare that life which must so soon return.”

Rowe's *Lucan*, book 1. v. 796—811.

Cæsar, Pomponius Mela, and Strabo, unite in the same testimony respecting our Druids, that they held the soul to be imperishable ; but they could form no better notion of its state after death than that it inhabited another body, for they had not learned to form in their own imagination either Elysian fields for the virtuous, or a Tartarus for the wicked. Neither were they possessed of the barbarous notions of the Gothic warriors, that the heaven of the brave consisted, in drinking wine and strong liquor out of cups formed from the skulls of their enemies.

• A persuasion of the soul's existence in a future state, led to that horrid custom of consuming in the chieftain's funeral pile his favourite horses and dogs, and sometimes his slaves and dependants.

It has been questioned whether Pythagoras received this doctrine from certain sages of the barbarous nations, or imparted it to them. But the latter opinion is highly improbable, as the doctrine was far more ancient than Pythagoras; besides that, the most ancient Greeks did not believe in a future state, as we are assured by Tully and others. If, on the other hand, we compare the ancient writings lately brought to view in India, with traditions preserved among the Cambro-Britons, we shall be convinced that the principles of the Metempsychosis were the genuine tenets of the Brahmins of India, and the Druids of Gaul and Britain.

In the institutes of Menu, compiled, at least, many centuries before Pythagoras was born, there is a long chapter, consisting of one hundred and twenty six slokas, or stanzas, on transmigration, and final beatitude. The doctrine there contained does not limit the journey of the Metempsychosis to human and bestial forms; it imprisons the wandering soul in vegetables, and plunges it into the depths of the mineral world. All beings emanate from the Great Spirit: "From the substance of that Supreme Spirit are diffused, like sparks from fire, innumerable vital spirits, which perpetually give motion to creatures exalted and base," stanza 15. These, as they first proceeded from the great Brahme, after traversing the universe, return to, and are finally absorbed in Him, as their centre. The Deity is there represented as punishing only to purify His creatures. Nature itself exhibits only one vast field of purgatory for the various classes of existence. Thus in stanzas seventy-three and eighty-one: "As far as vital souls, addicted to sensuality, indulge themselves in forbidden pleasures, even in the same degree shall the acuteness of their senses be raised in their future bodies, that they may endure analogous pains." "With whatever disposition of mind a man shall per-

form in this life any act, religious or moral, in a future body, endued with the same quality, shall he receive his retribution." \*

We have in the Welsh language a collection of the aphorisms of Druid philosophy and theology. A part of these are given, with a translation, by Mr. Edward Williams, at the end of the second volume of his ingenious Poems, published in 1793. Mr. Sharon Turner has also given a succinct account of the Druid or Bardic philosophy, in his vindication of the old Welsh Bards. The Rev. Edward Davies, in both his elaborate works, has nicely handled this subject. But in the preface to the Poems of the ancient Cumbrian Bard Llywarch hên, (*Lomarchus senex*) Mr. Owen has drawn out a very ingenious sketch from the materials alluded to. Some may be disposed to think that the thread is too finely and fancifully spun.

The Druid-Bards divided the whole of existence into three circles, or spheres; that is, so many different states of being: "*Cylch y Ceugant*, or that of the immense void, or infinite space; where there is nothing but God, of living or dead; and none but God can traverse it. The circle of inchoation, called *Cylch Abred*, where all things by nature are derived from death: this circle has been traversed by man. The circle of felicity, or *Cylch y Gwynfyd*, where all things spring from life: this, man shall traverse in heaven."

In what is advanced in the Bardic Aphorisms, as to the state of humanity, we see the doctrine of the ancients as descanted upon by Lucan, that death is only the means of renovation, and the entrance of a new state of being. The sentiment that God alone is capable of immutability, and that created beings must be continually passing

\* See *Indian Antiquities*, Vol. VI. p. 218.

through new and untried scenes of existence, and various renovations, must be a vast grasp of thought for a Heathen ; and that some of them were possessed of extraordinary elevation of mind, we have the strongest evidence. Notwithstanding all the absurdities of Hinduism, we meet with some of the most elevated sentiments in the most ancient compositions of the Brahmins. And why should we think it impracticable, for some of the descendants of the ancient Druid-Bards to hand down to modern ages, a summary of the principles believed by their ancestors. The doctrine of the transmigration is held forth, and attempted to be reconciled, with that of the immortality, and the ultimate felicity, of the soul of man. Man is represented as endued with free agency, and capable of surmounting evil by the due exercise of his rational powers, and the assistance of religion ; so that he may ultimately attain to a state of happiness, and be no more subject to suffering or to death.

Before man has attained to the state of happiness, or that of remuneration, he is subject to the various wants of a state of trial ; to the loss of memory, or an incapacity of retracing the states of existence through which he has passed ; and to death, or a passing from one state into another, by dissolution. And yet these infelicities are considered as instruments of bringing about the final happiness of man : in other words, the Divine purpose of freeing man from the predominance of moral evil.

There are three things inevitably essential to the state of humanity ; to suffer, to change, and to choose : but, as man is endued with the power of choice, it is impossible to know the other two ; (that is, his sufferings and probations,) before they actually take place.

As man is endued with that liberty whereby he may

attach himself either to good or evil, and, therefore, either retard or promote his progress towards ultimate felicity; so, if he suffers the evil principle to predominate, he must return to a state of degradation, there to undergo various penances. It is stated that, for three causes man is liable thus to fall back from that scale of happiness to which he may have attained: the first is a want of exertion to attain knowledge; the second is the renunciation of good, (or virtue); the third is attachment to evil, or vice. Owing to these causes, he sinks down to his former state of humanity once more, to undergo a new probation.

But, although man may, in all other respects, be virtuous and good, there are three causes which subject him to punishment: *pride*, for which he falls down to *annân*, or the abyss of misery; *falsehood*, for which he falls into the state of *obryn*, or suitable punishment; and *cruelty*, for which he falls into the state of brutality.

The three grand qualifications for overcoming evil, are knowledge, power, and love; the exercise of these, in their due order, are to be regarded as forming the moral perfection of man.

In the circle of felicity there is a cessation of all evil, a cessation of want, and no longer a liability to dissolution. In that state, it is represented, man shall have attained to the most perfect knowledge, from having traversed every state of animated existence, being possessed of complete reminiscence of all contingencies in every former state, and ability to traverse all states of animation that can be desirable for the sake of experience and judgment.

We see from this summary, taken from the Triads of Bardism, that it was considered by the Druids, that man was subject to various probationary changes, both below

humanity and above humanity. Repeated probations and sufferings would finally tend to the subduing of evil propensities, and render the rational creature fit for a state of ultimate bliss. We have certain metaphysical definitions of the things requisite to that state. None but God, it is said, can endure to pervade the circle of infinity; He alone can participate of the various states of being, without being liable to mutation; and He knows how to reform and renovate every thing without causing the loss of any.

In the remains we have of Taliesin's poetry we have a good deal of Druidism, and in particular the doctrine of the Metempsychosis. But it should be remembered that some passages, which have been applied to that doctrine, do more properly refer to his initiation into the mysteries of Keridwen, the British Ceres. Of this kind particularly is *Hanes Taliesin*, or the Bard's account of himself, one of the most curious things of that kind in all antiquity, and which we shall notice in a subsequent place.

In most of the poems ascribed to this Bard we find an affected mixture of Latin; and, what is worse, a strange mixture of Heathenism and Christianity.

I shall here give a specimen of some of his mongrel rhymes, in which the doctrine in question appears to be contained:—

Mi a fum gyd â'm ner,  
Yn y goruwchelder;  
Pan gwympodd Lucifer,  
I Uffern ddyfnder.

Mi a fum ynghaer Gûdion  
Tetragrammaton:  
Mi a dygum Heon,  
I lawr glyn Ebron.

Mi a fum yn dwyn banner,  
O flaen Alecsander;  
Mi a wn enwau'r ser,  
O'r gogledd hyd awster.

Mi a fum yn y Ganon,  
Pan las Absalon:  
Mi a fum yn Llyd donon,  
Cyn geni Gûdion.

Mi a fum bedrenog  
 I Eli ac Enog :  
 Mi a fum ar farn crog,  
 Mab Duw trugarog.

Mi a fum ar yr Wybren,  
 Gyda mair Fadlen :  
 Mi a gefais awen,  
 O bair Geridwen.

Mi a fum yn Arca,  
 Gyd â Noe ac Alpha :  
 Mi a welais difa,  
 Sodoma a Gomorra.

Mi a fum yn y Gwyn-fryn,  
 Yn llys Cynfelyn :  
 Mewn cyff a gefyn,  
 Undydd a blwyddyn.

Mi a fum gyd â'm Rhên,  
 Yn mhreseb yr asen :  
 Mi a nerthais Foesen,  
 Trwy dwr Jordonen.

Mi a fum am Logawd,  
 Yngwlad y Drindawd :  
 Ni wyddis beth yw y cnawd,  
 Ai cig ai pysgawd.

Mi a fum dysgawd,  
 I'r holl fydysawd ;  
 Mi a fydda hyd dydd brawd,  
 Ar wyneb 'daiarawd.

ARCHAIOL. p. 19.

The versification of the above lines is rude and simple : they refer to the Bard's prior existence in various ages, from the creation to the time of the deluge and the crucifixion ; boasting of his being present as a witness of those great events, as well as others, in some mystical capacity, in which he personates the order of Bards. We may amuse ourselves with the idea of self-importance, which attached to the high pretensions of this president of the Bards, and the admiration which he claimed among an ignorant people, who, in name, had renounced Heathenism, but were not more than half Christians.



*The Druidical Doctrine of the Universe.*

THE notions entertained by the Druids, respecting the origin and structure of the Universe, were perhaps as congruous as the conceptions of the generality of philosophers, among those considered as polished nations. The motion of the earth moving round the sun was known to Pythagoras, who obtained his information from the nations among whom he travelled, and particularly the Egyptians. Both the ancient Brahmins, and our Druids, appear to have been no strangers to the true doctrine of the Universe.

The subjoined extract, from a poem of Taliesin, as translated by Mr. Davies, may be deemed rather curious, as referring to this subject: the Bard inquires, "What upholds the world, that it falls not destitute of support; or, if it were to fall, which way would it go? Who would sustain it? How great a wanderer is the world! Whilst it glides on, without resting, it is still within its hollow orbit. How wonderful its frame, that it does not fall off in one direction! How strange, that it is not disturbed by the multitude of tramlings."

In another place he pretends to be in possession of a great stock of knowledge, respecting the secrets of the natural world; and represents the earth as a huge monster, rising out of the abyss, with one bright cœrulean eye, (meaning the light :) and then he speaks of the three sources of moisture; that is, the salt water, springs, and rain.

In the poem, p. 24, called *Mab Gyfreu*, among other

questions, the Bard proposes to his opponent to tell him where the darkness was wrapt up when day appeared ; who has elevated the mountains, and who it is that supports the battlements of the earth ; who has seen the soul, and who knows it. He wonders that those who are versed in books are not acquainted with these things ?”

In that mystical piece called *Angar Cynyndawd*, the Bard makes great pretensions to physiology ; as, that he knows the dimensions of the earth, and the various laws of nature :—

“ I the directing power know,  
 ’Twixt heav’n above and earth below ;  
 Why the adverse cliff resounds,  
 Or crashing spears are fraught with wounds ;  
 Why is the precious silver bright,  
 Why hollow dingles lack the light, &c.”

In that curious Poem, p. 96, &c. there is a passage which represents the Bard’s hypothesis of the Mundane system ; in which he speaks of the sun, moon, and planets, revolving round the earth, which is not consistent with the general opinion that Taliesin was so completely versed in the tenets of the ancient Druids. Throughout the whole of the pieces attributed to that Bard, who stiles himself chief of all the Bards of the West, we find an amazing jumble of bardic cabalism, with a slight tincture of Christianity. The copies have been in many places sadly mangled, so that it seems difficult to make out the genuine text ; besides that, there are numerous interpolations. It will not admit of proof that all the poems attributed to Taliesin are his ; but they bear marks of genuine antiquity, some of them being composed, in all probability, before his age. The antiquated lan-

guage, the abruptness and obscurity of the composition, with the mysticism which runs through most of the poems, render them unintelligible even to many ingenious Welshmen. Mr. Owen's Dictionary is an excellent auxiliary; and several of these pieces have been lately interpreted by the Rev. Edward Davies.

Many specimens might be given of the curious conjectures, or the shrewd quæries of Taliesin, respecting the laws of nature. He seems lost in wonder at observing effects, the causes of which were to him inexplicable. We shall presently resume this subject.

*Traditions of the Dissolution of the World.*

THERE was a very ancient tradition among the Heathen that, as this world arose out of the water, and was destroyed by means of that element, so that it should undergo final dissolution by means of fire. This is beautifully alluded to by the poet Ovid, in his *Metamorphoses* :

Esse quoque in fatis, reminiscitur affore tempus  
Quo mare, quo tellus, correptaque regio cœli  
Ardeat, et mundi proles operosa laboret.

Fate has decreed, as we on record have,  
That ocean, earth, and heaven's superior vault,  
Shall be the prey of fierce devouring flame.

As both the Brahmins of India, and the Scalds of the North of Europe, believed the future destruction of the world, it is highly probable that our Druids were in possession of some ancient tradition on this subject; and Cæsar has affirmed thus much respecting them, that they believed the world to have had a beginning, and that, in some age to come, it should be destroyed by fire. This doctrine was credited by the Greeks as well as the Indians; by Plato and Zeno, as well as by Zoroaster. The Chaldeans, or ancient Magi, taught that this great event would happen when all the planets met in conjunction in the sign Cancer, in the same manner as the great deluge had taken place; when, according to their astronomical accounts, the planets were in conjunction in that of Capricorn. The Stoics believed that the conflagration of the world would take place at the end of their great year, or complete revolution of the planetary system, which embraces a period of *thirty-six thousand com-*

mon years."—*Maurice's Indian Antiquities*, Vol. VI. p. 222.

The learned Grotius considers that the general tradition among all nations, on this awful subject, corroborates the doctrine of the soul's immortality. After noticing that that sublime expectation of a future state was entertained, not only by the Grecian philosophers, but by the Druids, among the Gauls and the Indian Brahmins, by many among the Egyptians and Thracians, and some of the Germans; he adverts to the notices contained on the subject under consideration in ancient writers. He particularly cites a passage from the Sibylline Oracles, as given by Clement of Alexandria :

Εσαι γὰρ εἶσαι κείνος αἰώνων χρόνος  
 Όταν πυρὸς γεμοντα θεσσαυρον σῆλαση  
 Χρυσωπὸς αἰθήρ, κ. τ. λ.

For doubtless that terrific day shall come,  
 When, by ethereal force, the treasures long conceal'd  
 Of the internal fires shall be laid open.  
 Bursting through all restraints, with horrid rage,  
 Flames shall consume the earth and all above :  
 The liquid currents then shall cease to flow,  
 The earth no longer wear it's wonted verdure,  
 Nor bear the trees upon it's fertile soil ;  
 And all the winged race shall droop and die,  
 Consum'd by fervid heat.

And that noted passage of Lucan, in the first Book of his *Pharsalia* :—

*Sic cum compage soluta  
 Secula tot mundi suprema coegerit hora,  
 Antiquum repotent iterum chaos omnia : mistis  
 Sidera sideribus concurrent : ignea pontum  
 Astra petent : telus extendere litora nolet,*

sideration is not such as all men would arrive at, by mere dint of reflection. It appears then probable, that all those who adopted it must have had it from the same hands; namely, from the eastern philosophers; and more particularly from the Persians: and history affords a sanction to this conjecture. We know that the Scandinavians came from some country in Asia. ZENO, who was born in Cyprus, of Phœnician parents, borrowed, in all probability, the principal tenets of his doctrine from the philosophers of the East. This doctrine was, in many respects, the same with that of the Magi. ZOROASTER had taught, that the conflict between *Oromasdes* and *Arimanes*, (*i. e.* light and darkness, the good and the evil principle,) should continue till the last day; and that then the good principle should be re-united to the supreme God, from whom it had first issued; the evil should be overcome and subdued; darkness should be destroyed; and the world, purified by an universal conflagration, should become a luminous and shining abode, into which evil should never more be permitted to enter."

It is further observed, "That arts, sciences, and philosophy, have heretofore taken their flight from East to West. The doctrine of the renovation of the world was current among some of the Celto-Scythians, long ere Odin migrated from Asiatic Scythia into the North. Orpheus had taught it among the Thracians, according to Plutarch and Clemens Alexandrinus; and we find traces of it in verses attributed to that ancient Bard: the Greeks and Romans had also some idea of it." And we must here add, that Cæsar affirms that this doctrine was known to the Druids, whose traditions were remotely received from the Thracian Bards.

As this subject is of so important a nature, I shall not yet close it. We have no documents preserved respect-

ing the particulars believed by the ancient Gauls and Britons, on the dissolution of the world, and the nature of future happiness and misery. As to the general point, that the present frame of nature should one day be dissolved, and afterwards be renovated, it very well comports with the doctrines of the Western and the Eastern Magi; I mean our Druids and the Indian Brahmins. There are certain notions current among the native Welsh, apparently derived from tradition, respecting the signs that are to precede the end of the world; and in particular, that things will be in that state of confusion, that the seasons of the year will not be distinguishable but by the appearance, or the fall, of the leaves on the trees. What an inspired writer says on this subject, hardly seems delivered as a matter of pure Revelation, but rather as an appeal to what was believed among mankind from primitive tradition.

With respect to the Celtic nations, as it relates to the point in hand, an ingenious French writer, cited by M. Mallet, has ventured to affirm, "that the Northern Celts, the ancestors of the Gauls, borrowed their doctrines either from the Persians or their neighbours; and that the Druids were formed on the model of the Magi." But we have already noticed that subject.

Many of the leading principles of the mythology of the Edda, differ essentially from the maxims of the Druids; but there were some things in which there was a general agreement, and this tradition of the dissolution of nature is one of those.

How far our Druid sages were able to extend their physiological studies it is not for us to say; but we are assured, that they professed to know much with respect to subjects of an exalted nature, with which the ancients in general had a very limited acquaintance. Pythagoras is said to have consulted these sages of the Western, as well

as those of the Eastern world ; and as we find an astonishing coincidence, between our Druids and the Eastern Brahmins, so the tenets ascribed to the former, are much the same as those ascribed to that philosopher, who was the first of the Greeks that made any proficiency in science ; and the attainments he made, arose from the information he acquired in his travels.

Pythagoras was acquainted with the true system of the Universe, as to the motion of the earth and the planets round the sun : but neither this great man, nor his followers, appear to have been sufficiently advanced in science, to be able to defend their discoveries against the acute reasonings of their opponents ; so that the disciples of Aristotle gained the ascendancy, and their philosophy flourished triumphant until the age of Copernicus. But the true doctrine of the planetary motions came from the East, and is supposed to have been long taught there by persons profoundly versed in astronomy and science.\* The Greeks confessed that philosophy originated with the Barbarians ; that is, with nations remote from them, and of whose language and history they knew but little.

We are informed by Cæsar, that the Druids and their disciples held frequent disputations among themselves on the sublimest subjects of philosophy, such as the magnitude and courses of the heavenly bodies, and the extent of the Universe. Some of them, probably, believed the earth to be motionless, while they regarded the sun as really making his diurnal and annual course through the heavens ; while others maintained that the sun was in the centre of the system, and the earth and planets moved round the sun.

It does not appear that the Romans had much scientific information to communicate to the Celtic nations ; how-

\* See Maclaurin's account of Sir I. Newton's discoveries, p. 33.




ever superior they were in the refinements of domestic life, with respect to which they had not been themselves long raised from a state of barbarism. Even Cicero speaks with respect of the acquirements of Divitiacus, a prince of the Ædui, who was versed in the study of physiology, to which very few of the Romans addicted themselves. Those who, in general, bore the name of philosophers among the Romans, even when learning was in its greatest splendour, made themselves contemptible by endless disputes and wranglings. Cicero endeavoured to introduce the Grecian philosophy, accompanied with the ornaments of rhetoric, and elegance of composition : he had a few friends who were men of brilliant parts ; but the laws of mechanism, and the principles of science, were not much studied by those celebrated characters. It was rather to moral than natural philosophy that their attention was directed.

The Druids, whatever was the real extent of their knowledge, were regarded with profound veneration, by an ignorant people, whose rudeness served to afford them ample experience of the truth of the maxim, that knowledge is power ; so that it was a kind of adage with respect to any thing that was deemed rather mysterious, no one knows but God and the holy Druids. These men were especially thought to be versed in secrets, supposed to be known only to those who held intercourse with the invisible world ; and, by their skill in augury, it was believed they had a thorough insight into futurity. Hence they held the common people, and even their princes, in a state of abject dependence, by means of the arts of magic and divination ; for nothing seemed so evident an indication of intercourse with the Divinity as the power of vaticination. In all ancient nations there were persons who made pretensions of this nature ; but no country was more

famous in this respect than Thrace, the cradle of the Cimbric nations. Among the Romans, the Etruscan Augurs were in high repute ; and instances occur of illustrious men consulting the Druids, from an opinion of their power to predict future events. When Alexander Severus, the emperor, was setting out on his last expedition, a female Druid cried out to him, as he went along, " Go thy way ; neither expect victory, nor trust thy soldiers." The Roman empire is said to have been promised to Dioclesian, by a woman of the same class ; but in that age, the order was degenerated into mere wizards and enchanters proscribed by the laws.

Tully, in his elegant Treatise on this subject, calls Divination a most useful and sublime science ; inasmuch as thereby mortals attain to the most intimate intercourse with the gods. " There is no nation, he observes, either so polished or civilized, or so uncultivated and barbarous, as not to believe that certain individuals among them were endued with the faculty of vaticination." It was argued against those who had but low thoughts of this science, " that if there be no truth in Divination, then are there no divinities ; but that the intimations of the will of heaven, given to mortals by means of that art, ought to be considered as one of the strongest proofs of a Supreme Being." Hence persons skilled in that *divine* art were looked upon with profound veneration by the Heathen ; but all such the true religion considers as false-prophets and deceivers. The changes of the atmosphere may be prognosticated by natural means ; and many occurrences in life may be anticipated by human penetration : but it is the true God alone that can unveil futurity. The Heathen Augurs had no just claim to the sacred gift of prophecy, for they had no supernatural faculty of prying into futurity ; and if some things came to pass as they said, it was, as to them, mere chance work ; or the effect, in



certain cases, of mere natural sagacity. If they were true *diviners*, then had they been ministers of heaven ; as being evidently under the influence, and acting as the agents, of the Divinity. The fallacy of their pretensions shewed that the dæmons whom they worshipped had no real existence. But the fulfilment of prophecy forms the most demonstrative evidence of the truth of Divine Revelation.

*On the Poetry of the Ancient Bards.*

As, by the *Druids*, we mean more strictly to denote the priests and augurs of the Celtic nations, particularly those of Gaul and Britain ; so, by the *Bards*, we mean the literary class of that society. It has been observed before, that the most ancient compositions were delivered in verse ; and we are informed, that the mode of conveying instruction by the Druids and Bards was by reciting to their disciples a number of verses, containing those maxims which they wished to impress on the minds of their candidates : they thus made their memories tenacious, and blended instruction with delight.

The Welsh Bards have been famed as friends of the Muse, under the most unpropitious circumstances. The brightness of their genius shone with a brilliant lustre, during the darkness of the middle ages. The subjects of their song were chiefly war and love ; and the ardour of their imagination, and the fineness of their conceptions, were scarcely rivalled by the beautiful mechanism of their versification. They sung their own compositions, accompanying the human voice with the sound of the harp and the crooth ; and their plaintive or rousing strains were the delight of princes. Every chieftain retained a Bard in his family, not only to administer to his amusement, but to record the valiant deeds and feats of the family, and to act as herald and pursuivant.

Prince Griffith ap Conan, in the twelfth century, enacted various regulations for the government of this order of men : in the succeeding ages many improvements were adopted, until the fatal battle of Rudlan, and the

massacre of the Bards, by the command of the ruthless Edward, who stained his laurels with their blood.

From the fragments still preserved of the Bards of the sixth century, their versification appears to differ considerably from the works of the Bards of the middle ages. The rules of alliteration, or *cynghanedd*, are but slightly attended to in those ancient pieces; and the poetry of several of them is but indifferent. Among the superior specimens are, "The battle of *Argoed*," in Cumberland; and "The Gododin."

But the versification of the Druid Bards, if we may judge from certain specimens still preserved, and that are believed to be older than the introduction of Christianity, must have displayed a rude simplicity in the structure. The form of verse to which I allude, is the *Englyn Milwr*, or *THE WARRIOR'S SONG*; or, as it is otherwise called, *Triban Milwr*, or *THE WARRIOR'S TRIPLET*. This consists of a triplet of seven syllables each verse, which are unirythm; for, it may be observed, rhyme is coeval with the language. Such, probably, were the verses that Cæsar speaks of, and which were committed to memory by the probationers; containing maxims of morality as well as mystical dogmas. I have here annexed some of these specimens, with a translation, and added similar ones from the pieces attributed to Llowarch, the Cumbrian Bard; but which, I am disposed to think, were the productions of a remoter age. Of the three lines of each triplet, the two first appear quite insignificant; but, upon minuter inspection, they may be deemed to contain some mystical allusion, according with the adage in the last line. Thus, the shoots of the birch tree may have been regarded as emblematic of youth; the shoots of the kindly, or female oak, may denote the opening charms of the modest female. In like manner,

What masters of the song there were among our rude forefathers, in the ages of which we are speaking, we can as little say, as they were capable of predicting the future greatness of the most celebrated poets of the two last centuries. There were even among them, men great in their day; and great and little are comparative terms: Cæsar preferred being the chief of a village, to being the second man in the Roman empire.

As to the much controverted poems of the Bard of Selma, with respect to the genuineness of which, I had rather be deluded by my credulity than undeceived by my scepticism; I have in this place only to observe, that Ossian does not come within our sphere: his mythology, as well as his language, are essentially different from those of our Druid Bards of South Britain. But, if the sweet voice of Cona charmed the Caledonian wilds, in those remote and dark ages, why may not the heart of some Cambrian, or Loegrian Bard, have been pregnant with a similar poetic flame? While Ossian was celebrating the feats of the heroes, whose blood mingled with the streams of Carron, or tinged the green fields of Erin, our country Bards had also the exploits of the brave to celebrate, noble deeds,

“ That wak'd to ecstasy the living lyre.”

Mr. Edward Williams, of Glamorgan, has a fine Ode addressed to the Muse of Ancient Britain. In taking a retrospective view of those early ages, the æra of rude simplicity and grandeur, the Bard breaks forth—

Charm'd fancy dwells on days of old,  
When raptur'd ALAWN tun'd his lay;  
His varied note, his numbers bold,  
Gave glowing thought its rich array;

And GORON, with unrivall'd voice,  
 Could bid a wond'ring world rejoice;  
 Could sweetly soothe each feeling heart:  
 He polish'd high the *Bardic Muse*,  
 And blended with her glaring hues  
 The soft'ning tints of ART.

Though countless years have roll'd away,  
 Since RHUAWN\* tam'd a lawless throng;  
 Yet RHUAWN's fame feels no decay,  
 But lives in Cambria's daily song:  
 He liv'd when nature's rural reign,  
 With freedom bless'd the British swain,  
 Unfetter'd as the morning gale;  
 For her he sang th' enchanting sound,  
 Bade echo charm her hills around,  
 And ring through every vale.

The gentleman whose song I have just rehearsed has long promised the world a *History of the Druids and Bards*. For such a work he is the best qualified of any man living: his laborious investigations, and curious collections, can furnish ample materials; but it requires the greatest impartiality, and the nicest discrimination, to distinguish between what is of remote antiquity, and that which only proceeds from periods subsequent to the retreat of the Ancient Britons into Wales. I do not expect such a gratification from the President of the Chair of Glamorgan, now in his old age. Had my friend been inclined to write for gain, he would not now have to recline under "a straw-roofed shed," and mouldering walls. His declining years call for repose and comfort; and his countrymen cannot be insensible of his genius and worth.

Mr. Williams still scrupulously regards what he con-

\* *Rhone.*

siders as the leading traits in the character of a genuine Bard: an inviolable regard to truth and peace, and a noble independence of soul. His various information, and pleasant manners, have opened for him the gates of the first gentlemen of the principality, who have not entirely forgotten the manners of their ancestors.

The pure principles of our most ancient Bards were those of peace. Those, therefore, who attended the courts of princes as minstrels, to extol the exploits of the warrior, and to instigate to deeds of blood, departed from the primeval system of bardism. But Mr. W. adheres to the genuine principles of the institution, and renounces war and warfare.

As to what regards the Music and Poetry of the Welsh, the curious may be gratified by consulting Mr. Edward Jones's *Musical and Poetical Reliques of the Welsh Bards*. In the *Myvyrian Archæology of Wales*, we have a complete collection of all that remains of the Poetry of the early Bards, Taliesin, Merddin, Lowarch, &c., along with specimens of pieces composed during the middle ages. The second volume of that curious depositary contains the Triads, and other historical documents, while the third contains ethics and laws. The editors were, Mr. Wm. Owen and Mr. Edward Williams, patronized by Owen Jones, Esq. a native of Glyn Myvyr, in the county of Merioneth. Mr. Panton of Anglesea, Mr. Johnes of Havod, Sir Watkin Williams Wynne, and other gentlemen, gave the editors free access to their very valuable collections of ancient manuscripts.

I have already remarked, that the songs of the Bard of Selma, whose productions, if genuine, are the oldest remains we have of any thing in this island, do not come within the sphere of these disquisitions. But as the voice of Cona seems to vibrate on the ear of a British an-



tiquery, the Reader will find that some attention has been paid to the Highland Bard. The idea of an epic poem, formed by the fancy of any son of Erin, or of Britain, in those rude ages, carries an air of absurdity with it; but that traditionary songs have been handed down relative to that age in which Ossian lived, and some the production of Ossian himself, I cannot doubt. As to Mr. M'Pherson's collections, their fate must be left to the gentlemen who have undertaken to investigate the subject; but if we may be allowed to form a judgment from the feeling which many of the sentiments ascribed to Ossian produce in the mind, the songs of that noble Bard still live.

We shall here make some remarks relative to the ancient Bards, agreeable to the traditions which are preserved in Wales; and then subjoin some of their leading maxims, as contained in a manuscript called *Trioedd Braint a Devod*, or Institutional Triads; together with those aphorisms which describe the indications of true genius and Bardic skill.

It is stated that, from ancient times, there were a set of *Pseudo-Bards* opposed to the *primary Bards*, whose principles were *truth* and *peace*; and, consequently, they were decidedly averse to the fictions of Romance on the one hand, and all military engagements on the other. The *Pseudo-Bards* were mere minstrels, who attended the courts of princes, and sung their exploits in strains of venal flattery: by such means they rendered themselves popular, while the primary Bards sunk into comparative obscurity. The genuine Bards style themselves Bards of the Islé of Britain, according to ancient custom and institute; the others, they term *Beirdd Beli*, or the Bards of Beli. The latter name, we are told, was derived from a prince of the fourth century, the patron of the irregular Bards, who were also countenanced by

Arthur. There are a few who still consider themselves as the genuine descendants of the primary Bards, and profess to retain their institutions.

We have given it as our opinion, that the word *Bard* is to be derived from *bar*, the high peak of a mountain ; and, in confirmation of this, we may observe, that Snowden was the Parnassus of the Welsh Bards, and as such was considered sacred.

An eminent antiquary assures us, that *Bard*, in its primitive acceptation, denotes a priest ; and if so, the *Bard* was the priest of the high places, and the contemplative stargazer ; while the Druid performed the rites of superstition in the grove. But as music and poetry were essential to the celebration of public worship, and the *Bards* were probably the priests of Apollo, the term *Bard*, as well as the Latin *Vates*, became synonymous with poet.

As the ancient Druids prohibited their disciples to commit the Bardic arcana to writing, that maxim continued to be held sacred by their successors among the Welsh mountains for ages, and is still regarded. The oral tradition by which their institutes were handed down to posterity lays claim to superior excellency, as a mode singularly adapted to preserve ancient principles, in preference to written composition. On this subject I shall use the words of Mr. Williams :—

“ The Bards and Druids, (both one and the same people,) of ancient Britain, had, before letters were known, reduced the arts of memory and oral tradition into a well systematised science. *Song* was one of their methods of giving permanency or fixation to orality : songs, skilfully composed on interesting subjects, were learned with avidity ; they soon became popular ; they could be transmitted, without the aid of letters, from one person, time, or place, to another, though ever so remote. Long details, and diffuse declamations, could never be

learned orally with any tolerable degree of ease, nor could they be retained in the memory; or, were it possible, and fact, in a very few extraordinary instances, it could never be so generally or sufficiently frequent as to be of any material use to mankind. For this reason, in addition to song, the Bards invented a variety of aphoristical forms, on fixed, regular, and unalterable principles, that were obvious to the understanding, easily learned and remembered: it was necessary that these should not be capable of assuming any other form, or materially different mode of verballity, than that in which they were originally delivered. Aphorisms, constructed on such fixed principles, could be learned with ease, and with ease retained by the memory; they would, with nearly, if not quite, as much facility as *song*, become widely diffused over a large extent of place and time. In songs, and in aphorisms of this age, were the theological, ethical, and scientific maxims of the ancient Bards of Britain delivered; and these were easily retained by the public memory."

The Bards had their provincial meetings and conventions, where every proposal for the regulating of their institutes, or any new compositions, were deliberately discussed; but the public approbation of the Bards could not be given until the subject was brought before a general meeting three times: and for their ultimate ratification they were subjected to the scrutiny of their grand triennial assembly, where all that had been confirmed at the provincial meetings were also recited, and the disciples that attended there from every province enjoined to learn them, that thereby they might be as widely diffused as possible. These were recited for ever afterwards, annually at least, at every convention, that they might not be deviated from.

Such were the regulations adhered to by the Cambro-Britons, while they continued an independent nation. Their Bards gloried in being the successors of those who bore that name in remote ages ; and, if they were not exactly correct in their pretensions, some excuse ought to be made for men who were so fondly attached to the ancient institutes of their country. Amidst the rude scenery of their hills and dales, they realized the truth of Taliesin's words :—

Eu nér a folant,  
Eu hiaith a gadwant,  
Eu gwlad a gollant,  
Ond gwyllt Wallia.

They, faithful still, their father's God adore,  
Pure keep their language, as in days of yore ;  
Despoil'd of native lands, from all exil'd  
But Wallia's rough uncultivated wild.

I have here annexed the form of a Bardic summons. Another, which varies a little from this, may be seen in Mr. Owen's *Introduction to Lowarch Hén's Poems* ; where there are many other particulars connected with the subject :—

“ In the year of Christ one thousand, seven hundred, fourscore and eleven, it being the longest day of summer, in the forenoon ; there and then invitation was given, at the end of one year and a day, to all that aspire to honour and maintenance by vocal song, and proficiency in Bardism, subject to the authority of the Bards of the isle of Britain, that they resort to Primrose Hill, near Caerludh, (*London*,) at the end of a year and a day, where there will be no naked weapon held out against them ; and there, in particular Jolo Manganôg, (Edward

Williams,) Bard graduate, according to the institution of the Bards of the isle of Britain ; and with him Daniel David, and William Owen, &c. &c. all these being graduates of Bardism, to pronounce judgment, in the light of the sun, and in the face of day, with respect to the poetic genius and aptitude of all that aspire to the honours of Song and of Bardism, within the limits and authority of the districts of Mongannog, and Gwent, and Ergyng, and Euas, and Wye Side. And this in the name of God, and all that is good."

I may be excused for giving in this place a note from the second volume of Mr. Williams's Poems ; it is appended to an "Ode recited on Primrose Hill, at a meeting of Ancient British Bards, residents in London, Sept. 22, 1793, being the day whereon the autumnal equinox occurred, and one of the four grand solemn Bardic days."

"The four grand and solemn Bardic days are, of ancient usage, the two equinoxes, and the two solstices ; the *new* and *full moons* are also, subordinately, solemn Bardic days. These are the conspicuous days, we may say holidays, of NATURE ; and were, doubtless, observed long before the institution of any other *solemn, sabbatical, or festival* days. This, and many other usages of the Ancient British Bards, bear the stamp of, and are obviously retained from, remotest antiquity ; these customs are not known to have been discontinued or suspended in any age whatever, but have always, to the present day, been observed."

The Bards of North Wales, although they have among them many excellent poets to the present day, it is affirmed, know nothing of the true and genuine Bardism. It is a false notion that our antiquities may be better traced to the district of North, rather than that of South-Wales ; for it is among the hills and dales of the Silurian

Britons, that the monuments of Druidism most frequently offer themselves. Minstrelsy has been in great repute in the North, and the people in general are very tenacious of their ancient customs, but not more so than the natives of South-Wales. In the marches, or on the borders of that country, there may be exceptions, but in the hilly and secluded parts of Brecon, Glamorgan, and Monmouth, primitive manners and customs are still retained. As to the last named, absurdly distinguished as an English county, its history and antiquities, as well as the language and manners of the people, bespeak it to be truly Cambrian, and properly termed one of the thirteen counties of Wales.

The genuineness of those pieces of British poetry, which are regarded as the productions of the more ancient Bards, has been ably asserted by Mr. Sharon Turner, the author of the *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, both on the ground of their external and internal evidence. The task which that gentleman has so well executed, was the more gratifying to a Cambrian, and must have the greater weight with those who are prejudiced against our antiquities, because the performance of a true born Englishman. Mr. Turner has given a just and masterly critique on those ancient reliques, and in particular on the *Gododin*, a celebrated ode of the Bard Aneurin, of Otadonia, in the North. The form and composition of the poems, it is argued, suit the period when the authors of them lived. To corroborate this argument, the *Vindicator* states, "That if they exhibited a complex, or even a regular Epic fable, or any mode of arrangement that critical rules would approve, if they were dressed in an elegant costume, or betrayed any skilful polish of manners or sentiment, we might have some room for suspicion; but they have nothing of this sort, they are as artificial, as humble in design, and as rude in execution,

as scepticism could desire. They shew us the real wilderness of nature, with all the discordant mixture of occasional fecundity and intervening aridity. Flowery meads and cheerful heaths, bursts of light and the most chilling gloom, perpetually succeed each other, without any careful disposition or judicious contrast: they display no order but that of the natural association of such ideas as they express. If they sing of battles, the heroes are praised without art, and the conflicts are described without method; not a trace of the fine models of Greece or Rome, not a single imitation of their imagery, or their poetical architecture, can be discerned: they are just such compositions as such Bards, in such an age, would be expected to write. Much of the inspired Bard will be seen; but no contrivance, no taste, no delicacy, no art, no polish."

Mr. Turner proceeds to apply his observations to that most remarkable poem which is still preserved, *The Gododin*. "The Gododin of Aneurin, the longest of the poems, is a very distinguished monument of antiquity, and its internal evidence is peculiar and strong: it is not of easy construction, because its text is much injured, and because it contains much lyrical measure, intermixed with the full heroic, and with the singular ornaments of Welsh poetry. The expressions are often very concise, its transitions very rapid and frequent, its diction strong and figurative, and sometimes made more difficult by the peculiar compound words in which the poet indulges, and which the Welsh language with great facility admits. Though an heroic poem of *nine hundred and twenty lines*, with one subject, it exhibits a strong character of genuine unpolished irregularity. It has no elegant and artful introduction or invocation; the Bard was a warrior, and had fought in the conflict he describes. He was commemorating friends and fellow-soldiers; he had

to state what he saw, there is therefore no reflective and refined address : he bursts at once into his subject, and begins it with describing not his plan or purpose, but one of his heroes."

There is a grandeur but rude enough in this Poem, so highly celebrated among the ancient Welsh : it is, in truth, like a wild forest ; like native mountain scenery, impressive and picturesque, but devious and irregular. Such continued to be the character of the Cambrian Muse ; partaking, alternately, of the horrors of war, or the plaintiveness of love : lofty, like the hills she loves to haunt ; abrupt and sonorous, like the torrents precipitated over the rocks ; or sweet and meandering, like the rivulets that gladden the meads. Of the Welsh Bards, in general, it may be said, that their remains exhibit few of the wild effusions of joy to be found in many other ancient pieces. With a few exceptions, it would seem that—

" Melancholy marked them for her own."

If, at times, the Bard, exulting under the wing of princely patronage, tuned his voice and instrument to cheerful strains, while the mead sparkled on the festive board ; this sunshine was soon obscured by fatal disasters that befel the generous patron. In such seasons of calamity it was, and especially after the victories of the ruthless Edward, that

Rob'd in the sable garb of woe,  
With haggard eyes the poet stood ;  
Loose his beard, and hoary hair  
Stream'd like a meteor, to the troubled air ;  
And with a master's hand and prophet's fire  
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.

But still there are not wanting a few among the



mountains of Cambria, possessed of the poetic flame. At the conclusion of the eighteenth century, that memorable æra was celebrated by a gentleman who is an honour to North Wales; and his countrymen have done themselves credit by the respect shewn him; a respect justly due to his abilities. Another similar specimen of Welsh poesy, intituled, "THE PRAISE OF BRITAIN," in the year 1805, was deservedly honoured with a silver medal.

As to the following aphorisms, they are not pretended to be of remote antiquity, as to the very form and wording; being collected at different times by different hands. Some of them are probably derived from the wisdom of ancient days; but whatever the reader may decide in his judgment, respecting their antiquity, I need make no observations on their ingenuity.

*Institutional Triades.*

THE three first institutional Bards of Britain were *Plennydd, Alawn, and Gwron.*

For three reasons are the Bards titled *Bards*, according to the rites and institutes of the Bards of the Isle of Britain: first, because *Bardism* originated in Britain; secondly, because pure Bardism was never well understood in any other country; thirdly, because pure Bardism can never be preserved and continued, but by means of the institutes and conventional decisions of the Isle of Britain. For this reason, of whatever country they may be, they are titled *Bards*, according to the rites and institutes of the Bards of the island of Britain.

The three memorials of the Bards, or the principal methods of commemoration, are stated to be; that of vocal song, that of recitation at the Bardic meetings, and that of established usage.

The Bards are of three descriptions: *Primitive Bards*, instituted before Christianity, and since that; the *Bards of Beli*; and the *Bards dissentient*.

There are three orders of the *Primitive Bards*:—The *presiding Bard*, or the graduated primitive Bard according to ancient usage, and the decision of a grand meeting; and his office is to preside or regulate. The *Ovate*, or him possessed of poetic endowment, exertion, and successful enterprize; his avocation is to exercise his poetic genius. And the *Druid*, who is to act according to the reason, peculiarity, and circumstance, of things; and his office is to instruct.

The three privileges of the Bards are, maintenance wherever they go; that no naked weapon be brought against them; and that their testimony be preferred to all others.

The three designs of Bardism : to reform morals and customs ; to secure peace ; and to applaud all that is good and excellent.

Three things are prohibited to the Bard : abusive sarcasm, immorality, and the bearing of arms.

The three modes of instruction to be used by the Bards : oral teaching, and song, and the established usage of the Bardic chair.

The three joys of the Bards of the isle of Britain : the diffusion of knowledge ; the reformation of manners ; and the triumphs of peace over devastation and robbery.

The three splendid triumphs of the Bards of the isle of Britain : the triumph of learning over ignorance ; the triumph of discretion over indiscretion ; and the triumph of tranquillity over devastation, and unlawful proceedings.

The three congenialities of the Bards of Britain : to elucidate the truth, and diffuse the knowledge of it ; to perpetuate the praise of all that is good and excellent ; and with peace to prevail over the lawless and predatory.

The three necessary things to be reluctantly observed by the Bards : secrecy for the sake of peace, and the public good ; invective satire, when justice calls for it ; and to unsheath the sword against the lawless.

Three things not to be controverted : the usages of the Bardic assembly ; the song there approved of ; and the decision there passed.

The three things which the Bard must maintain : *the Cymraic language*, the *primitive Bardism*, and the meritorious of all that is good and excellent.

Three qualifications there are, without which there is no being a Bard : a poetical genius, acquaintance with the Bardic institutes, and native capacity.

There are three things which the Bard ought to shun : indolence, because the Bard ought to display diligence

and exertion ; contention, because he must be the man of peace ; and folly, because he ought to be the man of discretion.

Three nations have corrupted the British Bardism, blending with it heterogeneous principles : the Gwyddelians or Irish, the Armorican Britons, and the Germans.

The style of these compositions displays a force of expression indicative of a corresponding vigour of thought, but which is partly lost in a translation. We have other ancient remains expressed in a similar style and manner, which call forth our admiration of so much native talent and rural philosophy, in the midst of a long and very dark night of error and Gothic barbarity ; during which, rudeness of language, as well as poverty of sentiment, disgraced the generality of European writers.

**TRIADES OF SONG (*Trioedd Cerdd*) or Poetical Aphorisms.**

**THE** three foundations of poetic genius: the gift of God, human exertion, and the accidents of life.

The three primary requisites of poetic genius: an eye that sees nature, a heart that feels nature, and boldness that dares follow nature.

The three indispensables of genius: understanding, feeling, and perseverance.

The three properties of genius: fine thought, appropriate thought, and diversity of sentiment.

The three things that ennoble genius: vigour, fancy, and knowledge.

The three supports of genius: strong mental endowments, memory, and learning.

The three marks of genius: extraordinary understanding, superior conduct, and uncommon exertion.

The three things that improve genius: proper exertion, frequent exertion, and successful exertion.

The three results of poesy: generosity, courtesy, and benignity.

The three things that enrich genius: contentedness of mind, the cherishing of good thoughts, and exercising the memory.

Three things that will ensure success: appropriate effort, dexterous effort, and extraordinary effort.

The three things that will ensure acquaintance: courtesy, ingenuity, and originality.

The three things that will ensure applause: amiable deportment, scientific skill, and good behaviour.

*The following are not less curious than those I have just given.*

The three qualifications of poetry : endowment of genius, judgment founded on experience, and happiness of thought.

The three foundations of judgment : bold design, frequent practice, and frequent mistakes.

The three foundations of learning : seeing much, suffering much, and studying much.

The three fountains of intelligence : boldness, vigour, and exertion.

The three ornaments of sentiment : perspicuity, amplitude, and justness.

The three ornaments of thought : perspicuity, correctness, and novelty.

The three embellishments of song : fine invention, a happy subject, and masterly composition.

The three diversities of song : diversity of subject, diversity of language, and diversity of versification.

The three sweets of song : facility of comprehension, sprightliness of language, and sweetly-soothing thoughts.

The three intentions of song : to improve the understanding, to improve the heart, and to soothe the mind.

The three aptnesses of song : apt language, apt thinking, and apt order in the composition.

The three materials of song : language, invention, and art.

The three indispensables of language : purity, copiousness, and aptness.

Three ways in which a language may be rendered copious : by diversifying synonymous words, by a variety of compound epithets, and a multiformity of expression.

The three qualities wherein purity of language con-

sists : that it be of primitive structure, according with ancient usage, and its matter primitive.

The three supports of language : order, strength, and synonymy.

Three things are requisite to constitute correctness of language : exactness in the construction of words, exactness as to the etymology, and correct pronunciation.

The three uses of language : to relate, to excite, and to describe.

The three dialects of the Welsh language : the Silurian, the Dimetian, and the Venedotian ; (that is, the Monmouthshire and Glamorgan dialect, that of the other district of South Wales, and that of North Wales) all these a poet may use indiscriminately.

The three essential qualities of a poet : genius, knowledge, and impulse.

The three highest attainments of the poetic stile are said to meet together, when the Bard so constructs his performance, that all the exertion of his skill is so easy, as to have the appearance of nature ; a grandeur of conception, in union with simplicity ; and a superior originality.

The three excellencies of poesy : profound discrimination of all things, complete illustration, and luminous composition.

Many remarks might here be offered, which for the present I decline, observing only that if I may be thought "to have travelled a little out of the record," it was partly to amuse my reader, and partly to shew, that there are still existing among us those vestiges of the manners of the ancients, which throw some light on the history of remote ages. We may for a few moments be allowed to forget, that our ancestors were rude heathens ; while we at least imagine, some traits in their character of a pleasing kind, before we enter upon the more displeasing task,

which truth demands, to investigate the nature of their superstitions.

In many cases, there can be no clearer indication of the antiquity of certain maxims and customs, than their being retained in ages so different from those in which they are said to have originated. The tenacity of the Welsh natives, in adhering to ancient practices, is proverbial, and among the superficial, and the modish, a subject of ridicule ; but the candid and intelligent will excuse the simplicity of the honest Cambro-Britons.



*The veneration of the Druids for the Circle and the Serpent.—The Anguinum or Serpent Egg.—The sentiments of the ancients on the symbolic worship of the Serpent.*

THE Druids were great admirers of the circle and the oval ; and their places of worship were generally inclosed in that form, which they considered the most perfect figure, being that of the great heavenly luminaries. The *wheel* was always regarded as an emblem of the course of nature, and the revolution of the seasons ; and there are modes of expression, bearing the same allusion in various languages. *Rhôd y Furfifen*, or the revolution of the heavens, is still a common expression among Welsh writers. The wheel of fortune is an expression, of which some are very fond ; and we recollect the historic anecdote of the captive prince, who was observed gazing on the chariot wheel of his victorious rival, consoling himself with the reflection, that what was now uppermost soon became the undermost, and the undermost would soon become uppermost. We have ancient monuments inscribed with this symbol, which is probably of British, and not of Roman origin.

In order to represent the motion of the planets, they had their circular dances, with their strophes and antistrophes. In the spring, in particular, they had their dances, setting up what we still call the may-pole, around which they anciently danced very sacredly, as well as merrily. From those kinds of *religious* festivals arose the *Christian* wakes in honour of the saints ; and the latter have been attended with the same *good* consequences as the former.

The coiled serpent was in great veneration among the ancients, as affording a symbolic representation of the annual revolutions of the heavenly bodies. As this creature was considered symbolical among astronomers, so also the sagacity of the serpent became proverbial, and the magicians had recourse to this creature in their enchantments.

“A serpent,” says an eminent writer, “was always an important symbol in the ancient mysteries: a living one was thrown into the bosom of the candidate for initiation in those of Mithras; it was esteemed an emblem of immortality, from the great age it sometimes arrives at; and of regeneration, from the annual shedding of its skin.”

The fable of Apollo slaying the huge serpent called *Python* has, according to some, an astronomical allusion: this we know, that the spirit of divination is called in Hebrew the spirit of אוֹרֹב OUB, which is interpreted *Pythonissa* in the Greek version; and, in the apostolic writings, the spirit of divination is termed the spirit of *Python*.

Our Druids, it is certain, were much addicted to divination; and the serpent was an important symbol among them. Hence that amulet, called the *Anguinum* or serpent's egg, was suspended from the Druid's neck. The manner of its formation is described by Pliny, in the following manner: “A number of snakes entwined together, in the heat of summer, roll themselves into a mass; and from the saliva issuing from their jaws, and the sweat and froth of their bodies, that egg is formed, which is called *anguinum*. By the violent hissing of these serpents, the egg is forced aloft into the air; and should be caught before it touches the ground, in a sagus, or sacred vestment. The person fixed upon for the purpose, must be immediately mounted on a swift horse; for

the serpents, according to this tale, will pursue the ravisher of their young to the margin of the first river, whose waters alone can stop their pursuit. The ceremony of taking the serpent's egg could only be successful at a certain age of the moon, which had great influence on all their superstitions.\*

But the amulet, generally used by way of ornament, was artificial, whatever the genuine anguinum was pretended to be. This was set in gold, and wore by the Arch-Druid. Whoever was permitted to wear this badge of honour, considered himself fortunate and invincible. Pliny attests, that he was acquainted with a remarkable instance of this, in the case of a Roman knight of the Vocontian family. That person was addicted to the Druidic rites, which had been prohibited in Gaul by Tiberius Cæsar; and, having a suit at law, he entered the forum with the anguinum pendant on his bosom, under the persuasion that it would influence the judges to give a decision in his favour. The Emperor Claudius was so incensed that he ordered the illustrious man to be put to death.

Although all this may appear to us vastly absurd, it shews the power of superstition, and how far the Romans were opposed to the influence of Druidism, the potency of which they dreaded. The Druids, being the supreme judges among the Gauls and Britons, may be supposed to evidence a partiality in favour of such who wore the badge of their own order. "Even kings," says Mr. D. "stood in awe of their tribunal, and would seldom close their gates against them."

The passage in Pliny, the tenor and substance of which has been just given, is here annexed:—

*Præterea est ovorum genus in magnâ Galliarum famâ,*

\* Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xxix. cap. 3.

*omissum Græcis. Angues innumeri æstate convoluti, salivæ faucium corporumque spumis artifice complexu glomerantur, anguinum appellatur. Druidæ sibilis id dicunt in sublime jactari, sagoque oportere intercipi, ne tellurem attingat. Profugere raptorem equo : serpentes enim insequi donec arceantur amnis alicujus interventu. Experimentum ejus esse, si contra aquas fluitet vel auro vinctum. Atque ut est Magorum solertia, occultandis fraudibus sagax, certa luna capiendum censent. Vidi equidem id orum mali orbiculati modici magnitudine, crusta cartilaginæ, velut acetabulis brachiorum polypi crebris, insigne Druidis. Ad victorias litium ac regum aditus mire laudatur : tantæ vanitatis ut habentem id in lite in sinu equitem Romanum e Vocontiis, a Divo Claudio principe, interemptum non ob aliud sciam.*

These amulets are still talked of among some old people, who consider them as the natural production of the snake ; but this species of superstition is now nearly obliterated. These adder-stones, or adder-beads, are called *glain-neidyr*, and *maen glain*. They were worn, says Owen, in his Dictionary, by different orders of Bards ; each having its appropriate colour : the blue ones belonged to the presiding Bards ; the white, to the Druids ; the green, to the Ovates ; and the three colours blended, to the disciples. Great virtues have been attributed to them : and it is said great numbers of them are still to be found ; and they may be had from certain people who are deemed clever at finding them. These persons insist on being credited that the *gleiniaw*, or adder-stones, are only to be had at one season of the year, and that they are blown by a knot of snakes.

Mr. Mason, in his *Character*, in allusion to Pliny's account of the *Anguinaum*, and the superstitious use of it, has the following fine lines :—

But tell me yet,  
 From the grot of charms and spells,  
 Where our matron-sister dwells?  
 Brennus, has thy holy hand  
 Safely brought the Druid wand,  
 And the potent adder-stone,  
 Gender'd 'fore th' autumnal moon;  
 When, in undulating twine,  
 The forming snakes prolific join:  
 When they hiss, and when they bear  
 Their wond'rous egg aloof in air;  
 Thence, before to earth it fall,  
 The Druid, in his hallow'd pall,  
     Receives the prize,  
     And instant flies,  
 Follow'd by the envenom'd brood  
 Till he cross the crystal flood.

In the writings of the ancient Bards we find allusions to this mummary :—

“ Lively was the aspect of him who, in his prowess, had snatched over the ford that *involved ball* which casts its rays to a distance ; the splendid product of the *adder*, *shot forth by serpents*.”

The Druids themselves were called *Nadredd*, or snakes, by the Welsh Bards ; and the whole of the tale mentioned by Pliny has a mystical reference to the difficulty of attaining Druidical secrets, and the danger of disclosing them. This title they owed, as Mr. Davies supposes, to their regenerative system of transmigration. The serpent which annually casts his skin, and seems to return to a second youth, may have been regarded by them, as well as by other Heathens, a symbol of renovation ; and we shall presently shew that the renovation of mankind, after the flood, was celebrated in their arkite mysteries.

The *Anguinum* is supposed to have contained a *lunette*

of glass, or small ring; and that this, more strictly speaking, formed the *adder's bead*, or *glain neidyr*. Superstition insinuated that this curiosity was a production of Nature; and that, to possess it, was a badge of Divine protection. But there can be no doubt that this famous object of Druidic superstition was merely artificial. The art of making these trinkets being only known to the Druids, they availed themselves of the credulity of the common people, to magnify the virtues of them, and to give them a mysterious import.

The Heathens have, in all parts of the world, generally had among them amulets, consecrated by the priests, considered as charms to secure the person wearing them from dangers and diseases.

The modern Africans of the coast have their *Gregees*, and the Hindus have a variety of charms. The Indians of America, and the natives of the South Sea Islands, are versed in this kind of superstition.

The Samothracians had their magical rings; a certain kind of amulets, which were believed to have a power of averting danger. Mr. Faber attributes this to the general reverence for the mystic circle, to which the Druids were particularly attached, and so are all magicians to the present day. In very ancient times the circle was an expressive symbol of the sun. In this, as well as other instances of superstition among idolaters, whatever import of a grand and sublime nature their ceremonies were designed to convey, they soon degenerated to the most absurd, and frequently to the most corrupt practices.

We shall have presently to speak more particularly of the serpent-worship of the Britons: but I wish to direct the Reader's attention to a piece of antiquity, of which both Dr. Borlase and Mr. Maurice have given us a copy, taken from *Montfaucon*. This is a representation,

not of divinities, as Mr. Maurice interprets it, but of the orders of Druids, of which there are two groupes, each of which are attended by a symbolical personage. The one groupe is composed of persons apparently young ; the other, of aged persons. The younger groupe is attended by a female figure, clothed from head to foot, and with gloves on her hands ; but the senior groupe is attended by a naked personage, with two serpents entwining round her legs and body, and embraced in both her hands. But in each of the Triads, or groupes, one appears more honourable than his associates, being decked with a sash, which is not the case with the rest. Each figure stands within a circle. The female figure clothed, seems to denote the state of the Novitiates, who are not admitted, as yet, to know the arcana of the order, or fit to gaze upon the naked truth ; the other figure, which is perfectly unclothed, denotes that those who are fully initiated are capable of seeing truth as it is, or admitted to understand the mysteries of Druid lore. The *serpents* call for particular notice, as being, among the ancients, much in use as sacred symbols.

As to the two serpents entwining the body, and their heads meeting upon the breast of the female, Pliny has something which illustrates this part of the subject. At the close of the passage cited before, he observes, that twisted snakes were considered as an emblem of concord and peace ; hence the *Caduceus*, or the rod of Mercury, around which serpents are entwined, was fixed upon by various nations, as symbolical of peace.

The Druids professed to be devoted to the employment of promoting truth and peace among mankind.\*

\* *Hic tamen complexus anguium et efferatorum concordia, causa videtur esse, quare exteræ gentes caduceum in pacis argumentis circumdata effigie anguium fecerunt.*—NAT. HIST. lib. xxix. cap. 3.

Mr. Maurice has a curious plate, representing two serpents contending for the Mundane egg. The subject is from *Montfaucon*.

In Sir Wm. Jones's Hymn to Pacriti, under the name of Durga; the destroying and renovating power, whom the Hindus call Siva and Mahadeva, is represented as reposing in a cave, there projecting the reproduction of new worlds: the female divinity approaches him—

“ She spread the garland o'er his shoulders broad,  
Where serpents huge lay twining,  
Whose hiss the round creation aw'd.”

The mythology of all nations is full of allusions to the mundane egg, and frequently in conjunction with the serpent. In the temple of the Dioscouri, in Laconia, there was suspended a large hieroglyphical egg; this egg was encompassed by a serpent. In the Hindu Mythology, Brahma is represented as forming the egg, or oval sphere, by which the creation of the world is designed. In Sir Wm. Jones's Hymn to Narayena, which literally means the Spirit moving on the water, we have the following beautiful stanza; in which is combined the idea both of the mundane egg, and the *spiritus incubans*, or the Spirit brooding over the great abyss:—

First an all-potent, all-pervading sound  
Bade flow the waters, and the waters flowed  
Exulting in their measureless abode,  
Diffusive, multitudinous, profound,  
Above, beneath, around:  
Then o'er the vast expanse, primordial wind  
Breath'd gently, till a lucid bubble rose,  
Which grew in perfect shape an egg refin'd:  
Created substance no such lustre shews,  
Earth no such beauty knows.



Above the warring waves it danc'd elate,  
 Till from its bursting-shell, with lovely state,  
 A form cœrulean flutter'd o'er the deep,  
 Brightest of beings, greatest of the great:  
     Who, not as mortals, steep  
     Their eyes in dewy sleep,  
 But heav'nly pensive on the lotos lay,  
 That blossom'd at his touch, and shed a golden ray.

In their veneration for the serpent, as a sacred symbol, the Druids only retained what their remote ancestors had acquired in some very ancient school, most probably in Thrace; to which country, according to the Triads, the Britons, (as one of the nations of the Celtic stock,) trace their origin. It is well known that most of the superstitions of the ancients were derived from the Thracian Bards, of whom Orpheus was the most celebrated; and in particular the island of Samos, off the coast of Thrace, was the far-famed nurse of mythology and superstition.

Dr. Stukeley has investigated the subject of serpent-symbolical worship; and Mr. Maurice has given copious extracts from the doctor's elaborate work.\* In the plan of the great temple at Abury, it was designed to exhibit the symbol of the serpent and the circle, known to have been in such frequent use among the ancient Egyptians: but Dr. Stukeley will not admit this to be an Egyptian invention. "The Egyptians," he observes, "borrowed this, and hieroglyphic writing in general, from the common ancestors of mankind." This he considers as sufficiently proved from the universality of the thing; "reaching from China in the East to Britain in the West; nay, and into America too."

What that ingenious antiquary says further on the

\* Maurice, on the *Origin of the Druids*, Vol. VI. *Indian Antiquities*, p. 174, &c.

subject, is so interesting, that I cannot forbear laying it before the Reader:—

“ Nothing is of so high an account among the Chinese as the representation of dragons and serpents, as we see in all their pictures and utensils; nay, the very stamps upon their ink. It is the genial banner of their empire; it means every thing that is sacred among them. In Baron Vischer’s elegant book of *Ancient Architecture*, tab. xv. you have the picture of a Chinese triumphal arch, (of which there are many in the city of Pekin,) upon which is pictured, twice, in a tablet over the front, a circle and two snakes, as on Egyptian works. They adorn their temples, houses, habits, and every thing, with this figure, as a common *prophylaxis*. I apprehend it was, from the beginning, a sacred amuletic character. It is carved several times on the cornices of the temple, (I take it so to be,) of Persepolis, as we see in Sir John Chardin, Le Brun, Kaempfer. Dragons were the Parthian ensigns, from whom the Romans, in later times, took them; and our Saxon ancestors, from the Romans. It is a known verse in the *Satyrist*:—

*Pinge duos angues, sacer est locus.*

“ If we consider the natural history of this animal, we must allow the serpent kind, as to their outward appearance, to be among the most beautiful creatures in the world. The poets, those great masters of nature, are luxuriant in their descriptions of them; comparing them to the most glorious appearance in the Universe, the rainbow.

Thus Virgil, *Æneid* V.

*Cæruleæ cui terga notæ, maculosus et auro,  
Squamam incendebat fulgor; ceu nubibus arcus,  
Mille trahit varios, adverso sole colores.*

Thus Lucan—

*Serpitis aurato nitidi fulgore dracones.*

And Ovid—

——— *Cristis præsignis et auro.*

*Ignē micant oculi* ———

“ Hephæstion II. writes, concerning the hydra of Hercules, that half his head was of gold : I saw a snake of such exquisite beauty in Surrey. The motion and the appearance, or bright golden colour, being so like to angelic seraphic beings, no wonder the ancients conceived so high a regard for the serpent as to reckon it a most divine animal. There is a kind of them bred in Arabia and in Africa, of a shining yellow colour, like brass, or burnished gold, which, in motion, reflects the sun-beams with inconceivable lustre. Some of them are said to have wings, called Seraphs, Saraphs, Seraphim, mentioned Deut. xii. 15. This is the name given to the brazen serpent ; and equally to the angels and celestial messengers, who are described of this appearance in Scripture. So the Cherubim, that supported the shekinah, in Ezek. i. 27. ‘ sparkled like the colour of burnished brass.’ The Divine appearance between the candlesticks in Apocalypse i. 15. ‘ His feet were like to fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace.’ Hence his ministers are called ‘ a flame of fire,’ Psa. civ. 4.

“ Secondly, consider the motion of a serpent : it is wonderful ; performed without the help of legs ; nay, incomparably quicker than their kindred of the crocodile and lizard kind, which have four legs. It is swift, smooth, wavy, and beautiful. The ancients conceived it to be like the walking of the gods ; whence the notion of deified heroes with serpents’ feet.

“ Heliodorus, B. iii. speaks of the wavy motions of the gods, not by opening their feet, but with a certain aerial force : it was called *incessus* : non ambulamus, sed *incedimus*, says Seneca.

Ast ego quæ divûm *incedo* regina, Jovisque  
Et soror et conjux Virg. Æn. I.

Et vera *incessu* patuit Dea.

“ So the prophet Ezekiel describes the motion of the alate globes under the cherubim’s feet, as it ought to be understood, Ezek. i. 12. Sanconiathan, the Phœnician, in *Eusebius*, writes that the nature of serpents is divine. ‘ It is the most spiritual animal of all, and fiery ; it performs all its various motions by its spirit, without other organs ;’ and much more of this kind to our purpose. In Jerem. xlv. 22. the shout and the march of an army are compared to the motion of a serpent.”

The doctor then proceeds to notice the ancient tradition of the wisdom of this creature ; and refers to sacred history, where it is said by Moses, that it was more subtle than any other creature, Genes. iii. “ Our Saviour speaks of the wisdom of the serpent, which, joined with the innocence of the dove, He recommends to His apostles, thus making it the symbol of Christian prudence.” Aristotle writes that this animal is crafty, but what is said on this subject the doctor thinks to be symbolical and figurative.

Snakes were thought to possess an enchanting power, and capable of decoying birds, &c. by stedfastly looking at them with their fiery eyes. They were also thought to communicate a prophetic spirit, by whispering into the ears of persons. The spirit of divination is termed by

the Hebrews the spirit of OUB, from whence the Greek name *Ophis*, given to the serpent; and the Septuagint version call the same art the spirit of *Python*.

Hence the rod of Mercury was entwined with serpents, as the symbol of his prophetic wisdom, and his power of interpreting Divine mysteries. The magicians made that deity their patron; and hence they so greatly venerated the serpent. The Druids, we are told, made Mercury the principal object of their worship, in conjunction with Apollo, or the sun; and Diana and Proserpine the goddesses of night. The Druids were sometimes called *Nadredd*, or snakes; and hence the amulet, which they wore as the badge of their order, might be called the adder-bead, or serpent's egg, as being peculiar to them.

When all these things are considered, we are not so much to wonder at the extraordinary veneration paid to the serpent kind in the ancient world. That creature was one while regarded as representing the revolution of the heavens, by his power of twisting himself into a coil, while the spots on his back were fancied to represent the starry firmament. He was looked upon as the symbol of wisdom and prudence, and he was considered as the emblem of immortality: moreover, Maximus of Tyre writes that the serpent was the great symbol of the Deity in most nations, even among the Indians.

That the Druids studied much in the symbolic and enigmatic way, we are not to be surprised at; for their insular and secluded situation would enable them to retain the ancient and patriarchal lore and traditions for ages, after much of them had been lost among many other nations. But they, like many other Heathens, not content with regarding certain creatures or rites as symbo-

lical, offered worship to the fictions of their own imagination; and in the midst of their wisdom they became fools.

How far the knowledge of our British sages extended, in comparison with other heathens, it is impossible for us now to ascertain. We are, however, assured that they discussed among themselves the most sublime and important subjects; such as the Divine Nature, the human soul, the future state of man. They were devoted to the study of astronomy, and sedulously contemplated the various productions of Nature.

That they were Polytheists, in general, we have unquestionable evidence; but that some of them possessed sentiments superior to the vulgar we may reasonably suppose.

How these Sylvan philosophers reasoned in their own minds, or were bewildered in their disputations among themselves, we can only conjecture from the discordant views of other Heathens, who, by searching, were unable to find out the nature of God. Among them, there might have been different sects, as to their modes of thinking, as well as among the Greeks. Some of them, through a ray of light from above, may have formed the idea of a Supreme Intelligence existing before this world, and distinct from matter, which He modifies and controuls according to His own Divine wisdom and power. But the generality of them, in all probability, were able to carry their thoughts no higher than to believe in the existence of a certain energy inherent in nature, the grand cause of life and motion. This was the doctrine of Epicurus, but derived from philosophers more ancient than his age: they confounded the Deity with the effects of His power, by which nature is animated and governed.

The poet Virgil, an Epicurean himself, in his enchanting verse, sets forth this specious philosophy :—

——— *Deum namque tre per omnes,  
Terraque tractusque maris, cælumque profundum, &c.*

GEORGIC.

For God the whole created mass inspires,  
Through heaven, and earth, and ocean's depths, he throws  
His influence round, and kindles as he goes;  
Hence flocks, and herds, and men, and beasts, and fowls,  
With breath are quick'ned, and attract their souls;  
Hence take the forms his prescience did ordain,  
And into Him at length resolve again. DAYDEN.

And in those fine fascinating lines in the sixth book of the *Æneid* :—

*Principio cælum ac terras camposque liquentes  
Lucentemque globum lunæ, Titaniaque astra  
Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus,  
Mens agitat molem et magno se corpore miscet:  
Inde hominum pecudumque genus vilæque volantum,  
Et quæ marmoreo fert monstra sub æquore pontus,  
Igneus est ollis vigor et cælestis origo,  
Seminibus —————*

Much to the same effect are the much admired lines of the philosophic Bard of Twickenham; and which, notwithstanding the beauty of the language, Mr. Parkhurst has ventured to censure as severely as Lactantius reprobates those of Virgil :—

*All are but parts of one stupendous whole,  
Whose body nature is, and God the soul;  
That, chang'd through all, and yet in all the same;  
Great in the earth as in th' ethereal frame,  
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,  
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;*

*Lives through all life, extends through all extent,  
Spreads undivided, operates unspent.*

POPE'S *Essay on Man*, Ep. 1.

PARKHURST'S *Hebr. Lex.* v. שׁוֹכֵחַ.

There are, as we have already noticed, collections of ancient philosophy and metaphysics preserved among the Welsh. Some of these we have laid before the Reader. The following extract is taken from Mr. Owen's Dictionary, article *NEV*. (heaven):—

“ Pump tywarchen y sydd ; sev daiar, dwr, tân, awyr, a'r nev : ac o'r pedair cyntav pob devnydd divywyd ; ac o'r nev, Duw, a phob bywyd a bywydawl ; ac o ymgyd y pump hyn pob peth, ai bywydawl ai ammywydawl y bo.”

“ Five elements there are ; that is to say, earth, water, fire, air, and the *heaven* : and out of the four first comes all inanimate matter ; and out of the *heaven*, God, and all of life and living ; and from the conjunction of these five come all things, whether animate or inanimate.”

The following specimens of Bardic Metaphysics, whether, as to the sentiments, they can be referred to an age previous to the Christian, I leave to the judicious Reader to decide. Some may, however, be surprised to find so much abstraction of thought among our Cambrian Bards.

#### *Theological Triades.*

There are three primeval *Unities*, and more than *one* of each cannot exist : *one God, one truth, and one point of liberty* ; and this is where all opposites equiponderate.

Three things proceed from the three primeval *Unities* : all of *life*, all that is *good*, and all *power*.



Three things are essential to the Deity : consummate life, consummate knowledge, and consummate power ; and of what is consummate, (or the greatest of all,) there can be no more than *one* of any thing.

Three things it is impossible God should not be : whatever perfect goodness should be, whatever perfect goodness would desire to be, and whatever perfect goodness can perform.

Three things it is impossible that God should not perform : what is most beneficial, what all want most, and what is most beautiful of all things.

The three stabilities of existence : what cannot be otherwise, what need not be otherwise, and what cannot be conceived better ; and in these will all things end.

Three things will infallibly be done : all that is possible for the power, for the wisdom, and for the love of God to perform.

The three grand attributes of God : infinite plenitude of life, of knowledge, and of power.

The production of all animated beings is said to proceed from Divine wisdom, Divine power, and Divine love,

In a former part of this Work we have given a summary of the Bardic doctrine respecting mankind as moral agents, founded on the system of future retribution, in connection with the tenet of transmigration : we shall, for another purpose, hereafter take further notice of those topics. But in the Aphoristic Triads just now laid before the Reader the unity, self-existence, the infinite power and wisdom of the Deity, are so explicitly allowed, that such sentiments as these Triads contain, cannot, with any consistency, be ascribed to the Heathen Druids : at the same time the mode of reasoning is so very singular, that it will be no easy task to decide from whence our Bards derived conceptions so sublime in themselves, and

so peculiar in the style and mode of expression. The light of Christianity alone could make known the unity of the Divine Being ; but it does appear that the Bards retained among them, from remote ages, a certain philosophy, which they blended with Christianity, and made its doctrines subservient to the dogmas of their ancient metaphysical creed.

The style of composition in which these Triads are written is abstruse and curious ; and shews that, in past ages, there were a set of men among the Welsh much addicted to metaphysical speculations.

If the Druid sages were strictly of the same sentiments with Pythagoras and his disciples, with respect to the existence of the Divine Being ; they maintained that the Supreme Intelligence presided over all nature, as the production of His own Divine power and wisdom.

The theology of Pythagoras is thus succinctly given by the Chevalier Ramsay :—

“ God is neither the object of sense, nor subject to passion ; but invisible, purely intelligible, and supremely intelligent. In His body, He is like the light ; and in His soul, He resembles truth. He is the universal Spirit that pervades and diffuses itself over all nature. All beings receive their life from Him ; there is but one God, who is not, as some are apt to imagine, seated above the world, beyond the orb of the Universe ; but, being all in Himself, He sees all the beings that inhabit His immensity. He is the sole principle, the light of heaven, the Father of all. He produces every thing ; He is the reason, the life, and the motion, of all beings.”

These expressions convey, on the face of them, a doctrine advanced by an inspired writer ; who adopted the language of Epimenides the poet, as the vehicle of the sublimest views of the Divine nature : “ In Him we live, and move, and have our being ; for we are His offspring.”

But if we survey many fine expressions in the ancients, and take them in that sense to which they were evidently designed to be applied, they will not be found to convey the exalted sentiments we may, at first view, be disposed to attach to them. The beautiful lines of the Epicurean Virgil convey only the notion of the *anima mundi*, or the mighty energies of nature; and very few of the Heathen carried their views any further.\* In some of the Grecian philosophers we almost think, at times, that we perceive a glimpse of the sublime doctrine of the unity of God; but we are again lost in the confusion of polytheism. Thus in the traditions we have respecting the Druids we may think that we perceive something of the same grand truth; but all their superstitions, and their fabulous theology, soon undeceive us; and we find ourselves nearly lost in the labyrinth of polytheism.

But even when these sages had a transient view of the truth, they feared to divulge it. Socrates went the farthest of any Heathen; he is supposed to have died a martyr to his profession of faith in the true God: but when Socrates was charged with forsaking the established religion of his country, he shunned to bear his testimony against polytheism.

Plato, in his attempts to excuse himself, may be supposed to speak the sentiments of many of the ancient sages:—

“ It is no easy matter to know the nature of the

\* Lactantius, in the seventh Book of his Institutes, has some fine remarks on this confusion of ideas in the Heathen authors; who distinguished not the Great Author of nature from His own works. His words are:—*Siquidem Deus divina et eterna mens dicatur corpore soluta et libera, cujus vim, majestatemque, quoniam intelligere non poterant, miscuerunt cum mundo, id est operi suo. Unde est illud Virgilianum: “Totamque infusa per artus, &c.”*

Maker and Father of the Universe: and, though you should discover it, it would be impossible for you to make the vulgar comprehend it."

Pythagoras, Plato, and Zoroaster, in their travels, investigated the most ancient traditions and notices on the subject of religion, and the sentiments of the wisest men respecting the nature of the Deity. In their researches they must have met with certain traces of the lore of the first postdiluvians; although disguised with fables on the one hand, and a false philosophy on the other.

Zoroaster and Plato had access, in all probability, to the books of Divine Revelation; and one of the fathers of the church had so high an opinion of Plato's theology, that he styles him, "The Attic Moses;" or, Moses speaking Greek.

As to our British ancestors, some among them may, at times, have had an obscure sight of certain great truths in religion: but either they concealed what they knew from the vulgar, or were overpowered by the prevailing superstitions. It is certainly too much to assert, that the Druids were worshippers of the only true God, as we have no evidence that He was known to them; whereas, as we shall soon make it appear, we have proofs, too glaring to be withstood, of their polytheism. It is possible there were, among the Gauls and Britons, in ancient times, a few discerning minds, who saw through the absurdities of the popular superstition. To such, as well as similar characters among the Greeks and Romans, we may apply the words of the apostle: "When they knew him as God, they glorified him not as God."

I shall conclude this paper with the words of an eminent divine:—

"The wiser Heathens did know that there was one

Supreme God; yet, from low and base considerations, they conformed to the idolatry of the vulgar. Like the idols they worshipped, they became vain in their reasonings; various, uncertain, and foolish. What a terrible instance have we of this, in the writings of *Lucretius*? What *vain reasonings*, and how *dark* a heart, amidst a pompous profession of wisdom!"—*Rev. J. Wesley*, on Rom. i. 22.\*

\* See also *Dr. A. Clarke's* Commentary on the same chapter; *Lactantius*, "De verâ Sapientiâ;" and *Ellis*, "On the Knowledge of Divine Things."

*The Religion of the Ancient Britons.*

THE ancient inhabitants of this island, in common with the other Celtic nations, were overwhelmed with the grossest darkness of Heathenism : they were devoted to the practice of the most degrading superstitions. The objects of their worship and veneration, like those of the ancient Egyptians, or the modern Hindoos, were almost innumerable. Indeed, the superstitions of the Druids have been considered as barbarous, in the extreme, as if the cruelties attendant on their acts of worship were never exercised by any other people or nation. But while we feel no desire to screen our British ancestors from the disgrace that too justly attaches to them, we are not to give way to the ignorant outcry, that they exceeded all other nations in cruelty and barbarity : for although, as a respectable antiquary has observed, “ the frequency of their human sacrifices are shocking, and their magic exceeds belief ;” we must, with the same author, observe, “ that the Druids do not stand alone in all the instances of barbarity which are laid to their charge ; although, at first view, several of their rites appear more singular and absurd than those of any other people.” \*

In prosecuting our subject, we shall notice the most ostensible proofs of the polytheism and false worship of our ancestors, previous to the introduction of Christianity, or its complete establishment ; we shall then more particularly investigate their mythology and religious rites, according to the light thrown on those subjects from certain British documents.

\* Borlase's *History of Cornwall*, book 3.

Among all ancient people, the genius of their superstitions depended much on their local situations, the nature of their employ, and their predilections and consequent pursuits. Among a rude people, there could be neither august edifices erected in honour of their gods, nor a very grand ritual of ceremonies. Besides, the most ancient postdiluvians retained, for some time, a degree of truth and simplicity in their religious views. As to the Gauls and Britons, from the earliest ages we have any account of them, their rites of religion, or rather of superstition, were exceedingly simple : their priests and sages offered up their worship either under the shade of the oak, or within certain consecrated places, inclosed with huge stone pillars, forming a kind of circular temples. Their grove worship has been that principally noticed by foreign writers, who have given some account of the superstitious ceremonies they celebrated within their Sylvan shades. Pliny has accordingly noticed their veneration for the oak, and in particular the misletoe that grew upon it : without the leaves of this tree, he affirmed, they celebrated none of their religious rites. But, like other Heathens, they had their high places, and their sacred mounts ; and the public rites of their religion were performed in the most conspicuous situations. The bosom of thick forests, and impervious shades, were best adapted for certain acts of the most gloomy superstition and magical incantations ; such as that sacred grove at Marseilles, described by Lucan, and which we shall presently notice.

All their sanctuaries were only inclosed by a circle of stones, but were not covered on top ; and this practice was derived from the remotest ages of the world, and originated in sentiments the most noble and sublime. The Northern and the Southern Celtic tribes accorded herein ; and both agreed with the ancient Persians and Indians :—

“ The vast forests and uncovered shrines, where the Scythians and Scandinavians offered up their worship, forcibly brings to our recollection, as Mr. Maurice observes, the wide spreading banian tree of India, the groves of Mona, and the open temples of Stonehenge and Abury.”

The following observations on the religion of the Celtic nations are taken from M. Mallett's *Northern Antiquities*, and are in illustration of our subject :—

“ Their religion forbade them to represent the Divinity under any corporeal form. They were not even to think of confining him within the inclosure of walls, but were taught that it was only in woods and consecrated forests that they could serve him properly ; there he seemed to reign in silence, and to make himself felt by the respect which he inspired. It was an injurious extravagance to attribute to this divinity a human figure, to erect statues to him, to suppose him of any sex, or to represent him by images. From this supreme god were sprung (as it were emanations of his divinity) an infinite number of subaltern deities, and genii, of which every part of the visible world was the seat and temple. These intelligences did not barely reside in each part of nature ; they directed its operations ; it was the organ or instrument of their love, or their liberality to mankind : each element was under the guidance of some being peculiar to itself. The earth, the water, the fire, the air, the sun, moon and stars, had each their respective divinity. The trees, forests, rivers, mountains, rocks, winds, thunder, and tempests, had the same ; and required on that score a religious worship, which, at first, could not be directed to the visible object, but to the intelligence with which it was animated.”

Such were the sentiments and religious views of the rude forefathers of our race ; although some part of the description accords better with the manners of the Ger-



mans and Northern nations than with the Gauls and Britons, for M. Mallett has evidently borrowed a good deal of his account from Tacitus's description of the manners and superstitions of the Germans.

Our Druids were devoted to the study of astronomy, which they perverted into astrology and magic. Their Sylvan fanes, and their sanctuaries, were constructed, according to some eminent antiquaries, on astronomical principles; and their form was either circular or oval. They had no walls: but the sacred spots were inclosed by a certain number of massy stone pillars, sometimes twelve in number, representing the twelve months of the year; or in those that were the most celebrated, nineteen large pillars represented a favourite cycle of theirs. In the midst was the altar; this altar was denominated *Crair gorsedd*, as they swore by laying their hands on it, the former word implying that, upon or by which, an oath is taken, and the latter implying the seat of power or presidency: it was called also *Maen Llôg*, or the Logan stone; that is, the stone of compact. The circular inclosure was called *Cylch y Cynghrair*, or the circle of confederation; their sanctuaries being the places of resort for making their civil compacts, or joining in a solemn bond of confederacy, upon occasions of peculiar importance, or eminent danger. Stonehenge was resorted to as the sacred spot most appropriate for holding national conventions, even after the introduction of Christianity; it was there that the British nobles met the Saxon chiefs, and were treacherously slaughtered.

The partiality of the Druids for the oak, and the shade of that noble tree, was not peculiar to them: the priests and sages of other countries were addicted to the custom of thus practising their superstitions, or pursuing their contemplations, in places secluded from common observation. The worship of the infernal deities, and the nefarious

rites by which their favour was obtained, or their anger appeased, suited the gloom of thick impervious forests. But to take a more pleasing view of the subject, we know how soothing to the contemplative mind, is the shady grove and the purling stream. The Druids had their magicians and sorcerers ; but they had also their Ovate Bards, those Sylvan sages, who studied nature among—

“ Rude romantic shades and woods,  
Hanging walks and falling floods.”

But whatever superstitions were common among the Britons, and their ministers the Druids, their veneration for groves of oak was the perversion of the patriarchal religion, originating partly from rudeness and innocence, and partly from the ancient sentiment, that, as God is present every where, we ought not to confine His worship to the walls of sanctuaries and temples.

In the first ages of mankind, the ages of primitive simplicity, the same person was the prince and the priest of his people ; he governed them in peace, put himself at their head when they went to battle, and presided at their worship. Their devotions were offered up in any convenient spot, and frequently under the boughs of the oak, or some wide spreading tree, which was capable, by its shade, of affording them a covert from the heat, or a shelter from the blast. Thus Abraham planted a grove, that he might retire there to worship the God of heaven and earth. But this innocent usage of patriarchal simplicity quickly degenerated into superstition, and eventually became the nurse of idolatry. These spots were perverted into sanctuaries of false religion ; and the name of priests of the groves, was the appellation given to the ministers of an abominable superstition.

The description given in the Old Testament of those

idolaters, whose abominations so highly incensed the true God, among the nations of Canaan, that he consigned them to destruction, accords most minutely with the accounts we have of our Heathen ancestors. The Romans were made the instruments of the Divine vengeance, and "made them ashamed of the oaks which they had chosen." \*

The infatuated people paid Divine honours to huge rocks, and to stone pillars; which, at first, were considered symbolical, and afterwards made objects of worship. Contiguous to their groves they had their sacred fountains, many of which are still recognized by the common people in a superstitious manner. The Papists gave a Christian interpretation to the Heathenish ceremonies used at wells and springs of water. Instead of regarding them as sacred to Apollo, Diana, and other Heathen divinities, they were sanctioned with the names of the Virgin Mary and the saints. St. Winifred in Flintshire, and St. Elian's in Denbighshire, were two of the most celebrated of this kind. As to St. Elian's in particular, the horrid purposes to which its waters were in recent times devoted are a disgrace to a Christian country. At this spot many malignant spirits have offered up, and devoted to a curse, either their neighbours, or their cattle. The polite *Nayad*, who had the charge of the sacred waters, recorded in a book the names of those who had been offered up; that, upon inquiry, it might be found what was the cause of the wretched victims of malignant superstition being subject to certain calamities. Those ceremonies were prescribed, upon the due performance of which, and the usual offerings to the *Nayad*, and the poor of the parish, assurance was given that the force of the incantation was now done away.

\* See Deut. xii. 2, 3. xvi. 21. Isa. i. 29. lvii. 5. Hosea iv. 13.

But zealous crowds in ignorance adore ;  
 And still the less they know, they fear the more.  
 Oft, as fame tells, the earth, in sounds of woe,  
 Is heard to groan from hollow depths below :  
 The baleful yew, though dead, has oft been seen,  
 To rise from earth, and spring with dusky green.  
 With sparkling flames the trees unburning shine,  
 And round their bolls prodigious serpents twine.  
 The pious worshippers approach not near,  
 But shun their gods, and kneel with distant fear :  
 The priest himself, when, or the day or night,  
 Rolling have reach'd their full meridian height,  
 Refrains the gloomy paths with wary feet,  
 Dreading the dæmon of the grove to meet ;  
 Who, terrible to sight at that fix'd hour,  
 Still treads the round about his dreary bow'r.

Some allowance may be made for poetic amplification ;  
 but still, upon the strictest examination, we shall find that  
 there were religious rites of the most terrible nature ce-  
 lebrated in the Druid groves. But we are not to sup-  
 pose, that all those sylvan sanctuaries were devoted to  
 the same dismal scenes of human sacrifice.

Lucan's description of the grove of Marseilles agrees  
 with a similar account given by Adam of Bremen, of the  
 awful grove of Upsal, in Sweden ; a place distinguished  
 for the performance of the most horrid superstitions.—  
 Every tree, it is said, was stained with human gore,  
 and foul with human putrefaction ; and on that account  
 revered, as if endued with a portion of the Divinity.

Cæsar gives us a succinct account of the superstitions  
 of the Gauls ; and, from what we can now collect, it is  
 equally applicable to the Britons. Both nations were  
 derived from the same parent stock ; and their religious  
 rites were of the same origin, and differed considerably  
 from those of the Germans ; which both Cæsar and  
 Tacitus agree to attest.

Cæsar represents the Gauls as a people excessively superstitious. So deep was the impression made on their minds of the interposition of supernatural agency in human affairs, that when any of them laboured under distressing maladies, or were exposed to imminent danger, they either offered a human sacrifice, or made a solemn vow to do so. It was the province of the Druids, as their priests, to superintend the accomplishment of those vows; and it was their persuasion that, in those cases of emergency, one human life should be devoted for the preservation and redemption of another. The offering up of human victims was therefore one of the institutions of their religion. In this they agreed with the practice of other ancient nations, who even offered up their own children; thus giving the fruit of their own body for the sin of their souls. Herein they differed from the Germans, who, according to the account given by Tacitus, had neither Druids nor sacrifices.

Upon certain extraordinary occasions, the Druid priests prepared an enormous structure of wicker work, which they filled with living men, and then kindled a fire in which the miserable victims were consumed.

According to Diodorus Siculus, it appears, that this dreadful *auto de fê* of the ancients, took place once in every five years. Public criminals were regarded as the most proper subjects, and as the most acceptable to their gods; but when they could not obtain a number of persons of that description, they devoted innocent persons.

That our ancestors, lavish as they were of human blood, and horrid as their superstitions were, did not stand alone in these horrid rites, will appear from investigating the history of other nations. Dr. M'Gee, in the notes to his learned dissertations on atonement and sacrifice, has discussed the subject at large. "The universal prevalence of human sacrifices throughout the Gentile world

is a decisive proof of the light in which the human mind, unaided by revelation, is disposed to view the Divinity; and clearly evinces how little likelihood there is, in the supposition, that unaided reason could discover the sufficiency of repentance to regain the favour of an offended Deity."

It appears from the investigations of the most learned authors, that there is no nation of whom we can collect any account from ancient history, that were not addicted to the horrid practice of making the blood of its citizens stream forth to appease the divinity.

The learned doctor enumerates instances among the Æthiopians, the Carthaginians, the Egyptians, and the Chinese. The historical annals of these last, record that most affecting account of the oblation of their aged sovereign *Ching-tang*, in pacification of their offended deity, in order to avert from the nation the dreadful calamities with which it was at that time visited. The venerable monarch is represented supplicating at the altar, that his life may be accepted as an atonement for the sins of the people. The Persians were addicted to the same practices, as we find attested by Xenophon and Strabo, and still more particularly by Herodotus, who relates that the manner of that people was to offer up human victims by inhumation. The Hindoos are so tenaciously addicted to the custom of human sacrifice, that we have recent instances of their devotedness to it. In the northern nations, those tremendous mysteries were usually buried in the gloom of the thickest forests. "In the extended wilds of *Arduenna* (or *Arden*), and the great Hercynian forests particularly, places set apart for this dreadful purpose abounded."

Even among the polished Romans this practice prevailed, as appears not only from the devotions so frequent in the early periods of their history, but from the express

testimony of Livy, Plutarch, and Pliny. In the year of Rome 657, we find a law enacted, in the consulship of Lentulus and Crassus, by which it was prohibited : but it appears notwithstanding, to have been in existence so late as the reign of Trajan ; for at this time three vestal virgins having been punished for incontinence, the pontiffs, on consulting the books of the Sibyls, to know if a sufficient atonement had been made, and finding that the offended deity continued incensed, ordered two men and two women, Greeks and Gauls, to be buried alive. Porphyry also assures us, adds Dr. M'Gee, that, even in his time, a man was every year sacrificed at the shrine of Jupiter Latiaris. See Lactantius *De Falsa Religione*.

The same cruel rites are ascribed to other nations ; the Getæ, the Leucadians, the Heruli, and the Germans, as well as the Gauls and Britons.

As to the Phœnicians, their proneness to these abominations is well known ; for, exclusive of the accounts of profane authors, we have sufficient evidence in the Sacred Writings, of the nefarious practices of the nations of Canaan. Diodorus reports, that they were accustomed to offer up two hundred human victims at one time. Of the Arabians, the Cretans, the Rhodians, the Phœceans, those of Chios, Lesbos, and Tenedos, the same charge is established. Euripides has given to the bloody altars of the Tauric Diana, a celebrity that rejects additional confirmation ; so that the universality of the practice of immolating human victims, in the ancient heathen world, cannot be questioned.

As to the more recent practices of the heathen world, the accounts we have respecting the natives of South America, from the Spanish historians ; of the inhabitants of the South Seas, by Captain Cook, and other navigators, as well as by the missionaries who have lately been among them ; all concur to corroborate the truth

of what historians relate as to the state of the heathen in ancient times. The savages of Africa, and even the more civilized Hindoos, are still addicted to these nefarious rites. As to the latter, I subjoin a relation taken from a respectable publication.

The Hindoos have a goddess whom they call Juguddhatree, the worship of whom is very popular. To this female deity, not only sheep, goats, and other animals, are sacrificed; but sometimes more horrid victims are offered. A poor wretch has been found in the morning before the temple, extended on the ground, whose head had been severed from his body in the dead of the night, and laid at the feet of the goddess as the most acceptable sacrifice that could be offered.

That human sacrifices are enjoined by the Hindoo code, is clear from a chapter of one of the sacred books translated by W. C. Blacguiere, Esq. and denominated the "Sanguinary Chapter." It is printed in the fifth volume of the Asiatic Researches. Mr. Ward, in his account of the Hindoos, has the following statement :

"However shocking it may be, it is universally known among the natives, that human sacrifices are even to this day offered in many places in Bengal. The discovery of these murders in the form of religion is made, by finding the bodies with the head cut off, near these images; and though no one acknowledges the act, yet the natives well know, that these people have been offered in sacrifice.

"About seven years ago, at the village of Serampore, near Kutwa, before the door of the temple of the goddess Tara, a human body was found without a head; and, in the inside of the temple, different ornaments, food, flowers, spirituous liquors, &c were found, as is common after an act of worship. All who saw it knew that a human victim had been offered in the night; and search was made after the perpetrators, but in vain.



"The following story is said to be credited, by a great number of the most respectable natives of Bengal.

"A brumhucharee (or Brahmin youth in a state of instruction,) of Kirtukona, after repeating the name of his guardian deity for a long time, till he had established a great name as a religious devotee, had a dream, in which he supposed that his guardian deity told him to make a number of offerings to her, which he understood to mean human sacrifices; and that then she would become visible to him, and grant him all his desires. He was now very much perplexed about getting the necessary victims; and, as the only resource, he applied to Rajah Krishnuchundru-raya, and promised, if he would supply the victims, that he should share in the benefits to be derived from that great act of holiness: the Rajah consented, and built a house in the midst of a large plain, where he placed this Brumhucharee, and directed some chosen servants to seize persons of such and such descriptions, and forward them to the devotee. This was done for a considerable time, some say two or three years; till, at length, the young brahmin became weak and emaciated with the perpetration of so many murders, and the Rajah began to suspect that there must be some mistake in the business. He consulted a learned man or two near him, who declared that the Brumhucharee had very likely mistaken the words spoken to him in his dream, for that the words might mean simple offerings of food, &c. A thousand victims are said to have been butchered through the dream of this stupid Brumhucharee!"—*Ward*, Vol. III: pp. 181—184. See *Missionary Register*, Sept. 1817.

But to return to the case of our Heathen ancestors; we see that they were not singular in the horrid rites by which their groves were polluted; and we need not discredit, though we may be shocked at, the account of their human sacrifices. As, when any animal was offered up, it

was the general custom among the ancients to exercise their skill in divination on those occasions, as an appendage to the solemnity ; so we find that when the Britons had recourse to human victims, they applied the nefarious rite to that purpose. The unhappy man selected for the occasion, was slain by one stroke of the sword above the diaphragm ; and, by observing the posture in which he fell, his different convulsions, and the direction in which the blood flowed from the body, the augurs pretended to decide upon the issue of important transactions.

We are told, that the Gaulish Druids were so resolutely addicted to this dreadful superstition, that, although prohibited by the Emperor Tiberius, they continued to adhere to the same practice even in the time of Pliny, in the reign of Trajan. That this was the case also with our British Druids we may perhaps doubt ; but, as the Britons were equally superstitious with the Gauls, the same rites, in all probability, lingered long in some parts of this island.

The horrid custom which still prevails among the Hindoos, of persons following their deceased relatives to the other world, by immolating themselves upon the funeral pile ;—prevailed among the Gauls, and probably among the Britons also. As to the former, it is attested by both Cæsar and Mela that, at their funerals, it was usual to throw into the funeral pile, not only certain trinkets and favourite animals of the deceased ; but the servants and adherents of the lord or great man, were often devoted to be consumed in the same fire, as the body of their master. According to Valerius Maximus, it was also usual among the Gauls to advance money, on condition of its repayment in another life, so thoroughly were they persuaded of the immortality of the soul.

The question might be proposed, to what divinity the Britons offered up human victims? In answer to such inquiry, it must be observed, we can only conjecture from the history of other nations, and especially from what is attested of their near neighbours the Gauls, to whom it was they made those dismal offerings. It may, indeed, be justly doubted whether they or any other nation celebrated those rites in the worship of any one deity, as the offerings exclusively vowed to that power. Moloch, "horrid king," or Saturn, was frequently adored by staining his altars with human gore. The Sun, considered in his consuming heat, that is, Vulcan, was worshipped with human victims: of this we have a striking proof in the Mithraic cavern at Alexandria: for when that celebrated spot, devoted to the superstitions of Mithras, was investigated by the Christians, human skulls and bones were there found in abundance. Lucan compares the Gaulish deities, Hesus, Taranis, and Teutates, to the Tauric Diana, in respect to the frequent immolation of human beings on their altars. The poet, enumerating the different nations that flocked to Cæsar's standard, speaks of the Ligurians, or Genoese—

*Et quibus iniquis placatur sanguine diro*  
*Teutates, horrensque feris altaribus Hesus;*  
*Et Taranis, Scythicæ non mitior ara Diana.*

And yon, where *Hesus'* horrid altar stands,  
 Where dire *Teutates* human blood demands:  
 Where *Taranis* by wretches is obey'd,  
 And vies in slaughter with the Scythian maid.

*Teutates*, or *Teutath*, it is generally agreed, is the same as Mercury; *Hesus*, or *Heus*, the same as Mars; and *Taranis*, or *Taranydh*, Jupiter, or the Thunderer.

These were worshipped by the Britons as well as the Gauls.

We have before noticed that, upon extraordinary occasions, the Gauls and Britons celebrated a most horrid solemnity of offering up a great number of human victims, at one time, to be consumed in one terrible conflagration. This was, in all probability, an act of diabolically frantic worship among their most savage tribes, in honour of their three-fold divinity, whom they venerated in the following symbolical manner :—

They selected the tallest oak of the grove, and cut off all its side branches, and then joined two of them to the highest part of the trunk, so that they extended themselves on either side like the arms of a man, making in the whole the shape of a cross. Above the insertion of these branches, and below, they inscribed in the bark of the tree the word *thau*, or rather the letter T, as a symbolic character expressive of the Deity. On the right hand was inscribed *HESUS*, (or *Heus*, that is the name which the Romans so expressed;) on the left *BELENUS*, (or *Belen*;) and on the middle of the trunk, *TARANIS*.

The above account is taken from *Cromer*, by Dr. Borlase, who ingeniously observes, that this ancient way of inscribing names on sacred symbols seems to be alluded to by the inspired ~~poet~~ *seer* of the Apocalypse: "I will write upon him the name of my God, &c." The symbolical beast had also a name inscribed on his forehead.—See Rev. iii. 12. xiii. 1. xvii. 3. We have elsewhere noticed the mysterious character still retained among the bards.

These huge oaks, thus consecrated, were, in all probability, the *Moesta simulachra deorum*, to which Lucan alludes; for the Celtic nations did not worship the Deity

under a human figure, in which they so far displayed greater sense than the idolaters of Greece and Rome. It was before this symbolic tree, inscribed with the sacred character importing the Divine power, and with the names or the symbol of their subordinate deities that, as I apprehend, the great holocaust of human victims was immolated.

There is a still more dismal view of the subject which strikes the mind upon enquiry, whether there was not a period when the people, who so frequently and so lavishly made the altars smoke with the blood of their fellow-creatures, partook of those sacrifices themselves, as it was customary upon the offering up of animal victims.—It is not altogether improbable, although we shudder at the thought, that those who could deem such offerings pleasing to their divinities, were capable of the enormity of banquetting upon them.

St. Jerome assures us that, when young, he saw in the Roman army in Gaul soldiers who were of the British tribe called Attacotti; and these, he tells us, were addicted to the devouring of human flesh: if this relation be founded in fact, then we have indisputable proof of the existence of Anthropophagi in this island.

The oaths still made use of among some of our ferocious Cambro-Britons, indicate the same thing, or whence could human beings ever make use of such terrible imprecations as are sufficient to chill the blood and make the hair to stand on end? But, besides this, we have undeniable reference to the abomination we are alluding to, in the collection of Historic Triads. Mention is made of a monster who is said to have first tasted human flesh in the court of Edelfleet, the Anglo-Saxon; and became so greedy of it, that he acted the cannibal ever after.

We have also, in another place, reference to the mystical birds of Gwendole, who were adorned with golden

yokes, or collars; these were fed daily with human carcasses. The killing of these by *Gall*, the bard, is spoken of as an exploit of great applause.

These mystical birds were no other than certain dæmoniacal priests, who still exercised their Heathen abominations, and at the same time glutted their vengeance on their enemies. But I am in haste to dismiss the disgusting subject; and, if the Reader be possessed of a degree of scepticism, it may be excuseable in me not to attempt any further illustration to satisfy his doubts.

*THE OBJECTS OF BRITISH SUPERSTITION.*

*These compared with the divinities of other nations—Mercury and Apollo—Gwyddon, Ganhebon, and Tydain—the Hyperborean Island, and Circular Temple—Stonehenge described—Worship of the Sun, Ceres, and Bacchus.*

EVERY account of the superstitions of our ancestors, given by the writers of Greece and Rome, must needs be very imperfect. But there are certain British documents preserved, and which afford us some assistance in our inquiries, on the subject of which we are treating. The mythology of the Britons appears complex and intricate; but it is not, in reality, more so than that of other nations, as it will be found to exhibit only the same leading features of error, that we trace among the ancient Heathen in general.

According to Cæsar, Mercury was the chief divinity of the Gauls; and the objects of veneration among the Druids of Britain were, in all probability, much the same as those among the Gauls. The country of the latter abounded with the images of Mercury: these were a sort of cubes, representing that deity as the genius of truth, which is always consistent with itself; for the cube, on whatever side it be turned, is still upright. Mercury they believed to be the inventor of all arts: him they considered as the guide of travellers, and the patron of merchants, presiding over all concerns of commerce and property. Next to him, they worshipped Apollo, Mars, Jupiter, and Minerva. Concerning these deities their sentiments nearly accorded with those of other nations;

namely, that Apollo cured diseases ; that the commencement of all mechanical arts was under the direction of Minerva ; that Jove was ruler of the heavens ; and that Mars was the god of battle.—Cæsar, *De Bello Gall.* l. vi.

It was natural for a Roman to compare the idols of other nations with those he professed to venerate at home ; and even the poor barbarians, it appears, knew nearly as much as the polished Romans on the great subject of religion. The language of Cæsar is rather remarkable ; *De his, eandem fere quam reliquæ gentes, habent opinionem.* There was then some difference which the Roman could distinguish, at the same time that he perceived a general resemblance : and we may also suppose that there was some difference between the Gauls and Britons in respect to the objects, as well as the modes, of their worship.

Mercury and Apollo are stated to be the principal deities of the Gauls ; and we shall find, on investigation, that this applies equally to the Britons. These two deities had, in certain respects, much the same attributes : Mercury was so popular an object of worship among most nations, that we are hence put in mind of the fable of his robbing the other gods ; and in particular of his robbing Apollo of his quiver and arrows. He was the patron of eloquence and the arts ; and so was Apollo. We have noticed the veneration in which the serpent was held by the Britons ; and Mercury always appears with his Caduceus, or sacred wand, entwined with serpents. The Druids made great pretensions to the secrets of wisdom ; and it was a maxim among them, that all knowledge was confined to the gods and the holy Druids. They professed at all times sternly to adhere to truth :—

Y GWIR YN ERBYN Y BYD,

Truth against the world,



was their motto, the ruling adage of the order. But their being so completely addicted to magic and augury, might be a sufficient reason for the Romans to affirm, that the Gauls and Britons regarded Mercury as their principal divinity. Mercury was the messenger of the gods, and interpreted the divine mysteries; and on that account the Druids considered him as their tutelary divinity.

That Apollo was worshipped among the Britons, admits of the clearest proof, whether we consider him as the supposed regent of the sun, or the patron of music and poetry. This subject of mythology we shall presently advert to more at large. Apollo they worshipped under the name of *Belin*, *Plennyd*, and *Granwyn*; Mercury, under the name of *Gwydion*, and *Teutath*; Jove, they called *Daronwy*, *Taranwy*, *Taranis*, or the Thunderer; Minerva was their *Malen*; Bellona was the same as their *Anras*, or *Andraste*. They had also their Bacchus and Mars, who seem united in *He-us*, *Hesus*, *Hugadarn*, or *Hu-ysgwn*: \* *Ked* and *Keridwen* answer to Ceres, and *Lleuwy* to Proserpine. There was *Olwen* and *Dwynwen*, their Venus; *Neivion*, their Neptune; *Arthur*, or the Constellation called the Northern Bear; *Nér*, Ocean, &c. &c.

With respect to Hermes, Taaüt, or Mercury, he was held in great repute among various nations. Mr. Faber regards him as the same mythological character with the Budha of India, the Fohi of the Chinese, and the Odin or Woden of the Scandinavians; and Tacitus assures us that Mercury was the principal divinity of the ancient Germans. The Saxons, as well as the Romans, nominated the fourth day of the week after that idol;

\* *Hu*, according to the Welsh orthography, sounds *hee*, or *hi*, with a soft pronunciation.

hence *Dies Mercurii* corresponds with Woden's-day, or Wednesday. The Roman-Britons also called that day *Dydd Merchur*. Odin, like Mercury, is said to have descended into the infernal region; and, like Hermes or Taaüt, he is said to be the inventor of letters.

When the Britons became Romanized, those of them who did not embrace Christianity adopted the names of the Roman deities; and hence we have the Roman names for the days of the week among the natives of Wales. They say *Dydd Mawrth* for Tuesday, *Dydd Merchur* for Wednesday, *D. Jou* for Thursday, *D. Gwener* for Friday, and *D. Sadwrn* for Saturday.

Some of the months have Roman names, and others have British names, denoting the seasons of the year. Of the latter are—

*Mehevin* (June), or the summer month.

*Gorphenhâv*, (July), or the summer end.

*Medi*, (September), or the reaping month.

*Hy-dre*, (October), or harvest-home.

*Tachwedd*, (November), or the foggy.

*Rhagvyr*, (December), the short days; or *Mis du*, the black month.

The names of the other months are—

*Jonawr*, January; *Chwefror*, February;

*Mawrth*, March; *Ebrill*, April;

*Mai*, May; and *Awst*, August.

These are derived from the Roman names, which we still retain as the English names of the months.

Taaüt, or Thoth, was worshipped by the ancient Irish, (according to Valancey,) under the name of *Tat*, or *Tath*, being the same character as Teutath, who can be no other than Mercury. Hence, as the first month of the

Egyptians, which commenced on the calends of August, was called *Thoth*, in honour of that divinity; so the first day of August was, by the Irish, called *La Tat*. But this character appears to have been blended with the solar luminary; for, in Irish, *tath* is a lion, and that noble beast was symbolical of the sun, or the solar heat; *teith* is heat, *tethin* the sun; and *taith* signifies the course of the sun.

Here we find the character of Mercury and Apollo blending into one; both of them were equally the patrons of science and of letters: and we find a perpetual interchange of character among the various objects of Heathen worship.

*Gwydion*, the son of Don or Jove, is spoken of as one of the three great astronomers, in company with *Idris* and *Nudd*. He is sometimes taken for a personification of the galaxy, and at other times for Mercury.

There are two other names mentioned in the Triads, which are evidently mythological, and which it is proper to notice in this place: under the first, we recognize the British *Hermes*, and in the other the *Apollo* of our ancestors. The first is *Gwyddon Garhebon*, who first composed vocal song; and of him, it is affirmed, that he delineated, by engraving upon stones, the arts and sciences of the world: he taught the arts of peace, and the principles of justice; and was the first who adapted poetry to the preservation of memorials and historical records. This character cannot fail reminding us, very forcibly, as a recent author remarks, of the inscribed pillars of *Hermes* or *Thoth*. The Celts, like other nations, venerated with divine honours the supposed father of history and the arts, and the inventor of letters.

The second personage is *Titain*, or *Tydain*, the father of the muse, who first regulated the laws of poetry. He was deemed the principal of the three primary composers,

or harmonists, because he reduced to system the means of preserving historic records and vocal song; and out of that system were invented the regular privileges and customs of the Bards and Bardism; for he, it is said, first brought in those improvements whereby vocal song was established upon scientific principles; or, as some would say, he was the first projector of the harmonic scale. The name of this personage, as well as his skill in harmonic science, would induce us to consider him as being identified with the Titan or Apollo of the Greeks; but he may very plausibly be made the same character as Thoth, or Hermes. Mr. Owen was inclined to this latter opinion, from several concurrent circumstances, which induced him to regard Tydain as the same with Thoth or Hermes, the inventor of the arts.

*Plennydd* is the first of the three primary Bards, the other two being *Alon* and *Goron*. The name indicates splendour, radiancy, brightness; and was given to the solar divinity; and we still say, *Y tîs yss plennydd*, for the radiancy and heat of the sun beams. But perhaps *Plennydd* may be the same word as *Belennydd*, a name of the solar orb; to be derived from *belen*, a ball.

Here we shall advert to Diodorus Siculus's account of that famous island of the Hyperboreans; which it has been generally admitted can apply to none so properly as that of Great Britain.\*

“Hecateus and others, who have written very wonderful descriptions, say, that an island, large as Sicily, is situated opposite to Gaul, and near the Arctic circle; it is inhabited by the Hyperboreans, who are so named as being placed beyond the gates of Boreas, or of the North: the soil is rich and very fruitful, the climate temperate,

\* See an article in the *Classical Journal*, No. 5, on the identity of Albion with the Hyperborean island of Herodotus.

and two crops are reaped within the year. They worship Apollo with greater reverence than any of the other deities ; they sing every day hymns to his praise, they ascribe to him the highest glories, they act as if all the inhabitants were his priests ; *they have dedicated to him a dark grove, and a celebrated temple of a circular form, decorated with many rich donations* : a city is also devoted to him, the inhabitants of which are principally harpers, who chaunt to their favourite instrument hymns to the Apollo of their temple, and celebrate his glorious actions. They speak their own peculiar language !

“ Apollo comes once in nineteen years into the island : in this space of time the stars perform their revolutions, and return to the same point ; hence the Greeks call this revolution THE GREAT YEAR. At the time of his re-appearance, they report, that he plays upon the harp, and sings and dances through the night, from the vernal equinox to the Pleiades ; self-pleased with the encomiums upon his successful enterprizes. The sovereignty of the city, and the care of the temple, belong exclusively to the Boreades, the posterity of Boreas, who succeed to the throne in a regular descent from their great ancestor. From a remote and distant date, they have entertained a peculiar affection for the Greeks, and beyond the other parts of Greece for Delos : Greeks have travelled to their island, and deposited among them various offerings, inscribed with *Greek letters* ; and *Abaris*, in return, travelled into Greece, and renewed the ancient ties of friendship with the Delians.”

From what has been already noticed, as well as what shall be further advanced, respecting the mythology of the Britons, and their attachment to the study of astronomy, as well as their fondness for music and poetry, the account of Hecateus appears very striking when applied to our ancestors. The famous circular temple agrees

well with that grand national edifice on Salisbury Plain, which no doubt was anciently surrounded with a grove. The peculiarity of the old British tongue, which the Druids cultivated with so great assiduity, and the ingenuity of those sages in adapting it to a variously combined versification, coincide with what is said of the peculiar language of the priests, mentioned by the historian.

As to the geographical situation, with some allowance for the want of exact information in so remote a period, and the fondness for the marvellous, which prevailed so much among the Greeks, the general description will not be found suited to any other island so well as our own. The largeness and fertility of the island, and its lying over against Gaul, sufficiently identify it with Great Britain.

That no other than Stonehenge, or the vast circular temple, called by the ancient Britons *Coir Gawr*, (Choreus Magnus,) can be designed in the description of Hecateus, is the decided opinion of the learned and ingenious author of *Indian Antiquities*. The remains of a similar ancient edifice at Abury had passed unnoticed until investigated by Dr. Stukeley.

Both were built on the same principle ; but the latter is pronounced to be several ages more ancient than Stonehenge. It is a probable supposition that both are referred to in our ancient documents, under the names of *Caer Emrys*, *Bryn Gwyddon*, and *Coir Gawr*. The name of *Bryn Gwyddon*, or the Mount of the Sages, may well apply to Abury, as being situated on an eminence. The one was built in all probability, by the Aborigines ; and the other, by a posterior colony ; and the line of partition being made to distinguish their different settlements, the subdued party had to erect a new temple. Whether this conjecture will solve the difficulty respecting these two

remarkable ruins being found so near to each other, I merely propose, until something more probable be advanced.

Some account, by way of description, may here be expected; I therefore present the Reader with that contained in Gough's edition of *Cumden's Britannia*.

“ *Stonehenge* stands in the middle of a fine flat area, near the summit of a hill, and is inclosed with a circular double bank and ditch, near thirty feet broad, the vallum inwards; after crossing which we ascend thirty yards before we reach the work: the whole forms a circle of about one hundred and eight feet diameter, from out to out; consisting, when entire, of sixty stones, thirty upright and thirty imposts; of which remain only twenty-four upright, seventeen standing and seven down, three feet and a half asunder, and eight imposts.

“ Eleven uprights have their five imposts on them by the grand entrance. These stones are from thirteen to twenty feet high: the lesser circle is somewhat more than eight feet from the inside of the outer one, and consisted of forty lesser stones, (the highest six feet,) of which only nineteen remain, and only eleven standing: the walk between these two circles is three hundred feet in circumference. The adytum or cell, is an oval, formed of ten stones, (from sixteen to twenty-two feet high,) in pairs, with imposts, which Dr. Stukeley calls trilithons, and above thirty feet high, rising in height as they go round, and each pair separate, and not connected as the outer pair; the highest eight feet: within these are nineteen more smaller stones, of which only six are standing. At the upper end of the adytum is an altar, a large slab of blue coarse marble, twenty inches thick, sixteen feet long, and four broad, pressed down by the weight of the vast stones that have fallen upon it. The whole number of stones, uprights, imposts, and altars, is exactly one hun-

dred and forty. The stones are far from being artificial; but were most probably brought here from the Grey Weathers on Marlborough Downs, fifteen or sixteen miles off; and, if tried with a tool, they appear of the same hardness, grain, and colour; generally reddish. The heads of oxen, deer, and other beasts, have been found in digging in and about Stonehenge; but human bones only in the adjacent barrows."

Dr. Stukeley, in 1723, dug on the inside of the altar to a bed of solid chalk, mixed with flints. In the reign of Henry VIII. was found here a plate of tin, inscribed with many letters; but in so strange a character that neither Sir Thomas Elliott, a learned antiquary, nor Mr. Lilly, master of St. Paul's school, could make them out. This plate, to the great loss of the learned world, was soon after lost.

"Two stone pillars appear at the foot of the bank next the area, in which the buildings stand; and those are answered by two spherical pits, at the foot of the said bank, one with a single bank of earth about it, and the other with a double bank, separated by a ditch."

"There are three entrances from the plain to the structure, the most considerable of which is from the north-east; and at each of them were raised on the outside of the trench two huge stones, with two smaller ones within, parallel to them. The avenues to Stonehenge were first discovered by Mr. Aubrey. Dr. Stukeley found that it had extended more than one thousand seven hundred feet down to the bottom of the valley, and was raised a little above the Downs by two ditches: at the bottom, it turns off to the right, or east, with a circular sweep; and then, in a straight line, goes up the hill between two groups, of seven barrows each, called The King's Graves. The other branch points north-west, and enters the cursus: this is half a mile north from Stonehenge,



ten thousand feet or two miles long, inclosed by two ditches, three hundred and fifty feet asunder."

Such was the magnificent structure raised by the ancient Britons to their Apollo, or the representative of the solar luminary, who was at first worshipped as the representative of the Supreme, and then as the direct object of religious veneration. All temples dedicated to the sun were circular and open at the top, and thus in particular it was among the ancient Persians: the Scythians, as well as them, esteemed it impious to confine the Deity, who pervades all nature, and whose temple is earth and skies, within the narrow limits of a covered shrine, erected by mortal hands. This mode of reasoning, when applied to the Supreme Divinity, was just; but the reason why these idolaters had their temples uncovered was, that they might be open to the rays of that luminary, to whom they addressed their worship.

"The worship of the sun," says Mr. Maurice, "was the basis both of the eastern and western superstition; and therefore, if we find obelisks and other erected pillars in Egypt and Asia, so we may naturally expect to discover them in the British isles, and here they are found dispersed over the country in the greatest abundance. In the very word obelisk, we may trace the oriental name of the solar deity BAAL, known to the Druids by the resembling title of Belenus, (or Belin,) their god of fire, and apparent in the term BEALTINE, or the fires that flamed to Baal, all over the country on May eve."

The rude stone monuments or obelisks, some of which still remain, were, according to our mythologists, symbolical of the sun, and worshipped as such; and hence their temples were constructed of a particular number of those vast stones, as at Stonehenge and Abury. It was also customary, with vast toil and labour, to place huge rocks of stone, one upon the other, for purposes of super-

stition. The stones thus placed, were oftentimes poized so equally as to be affected with the least external force ; nay, a breath of wind would cause them to vibrate. Dr. Borlase has described such in his history of Cornwall. These were the *Maen llôg*, or the Logan stone, which were subservient to various purposes of superstition.

The obelisks, or huge erect stones, were called by the name of *amber*, or *ampyr*, by which was signified any thing solar or Divine. They were called by the Greeks *Petræ Ambrosiæ*, (Πετραι Αμβροσιαι,) hence the name of the town of Ambresbury, near Stonehenge, because that vast fabric was composed of these amber stones. Mr. Bryant, who has made that remark, knew not that the Welsh name of *Caer Emrys*, or the Ambrosial Circle, is derived from the same source.

That profound veneration for rocks and stones of enormous magnitude has been called *Scythicism* ; and Mr. Maurice's remark seems to be just, that such practices originated among a race accustomed to behold nature in her most rugged dress, among dreadful precipices and lofty mountains, such as those of Caucasus, which serves equally as a boundary to Scythia and India. This stone worship was not confined to such countries ; and, wherever such a superstition prevailed, it was attended with the most sanguinary rites. The altars of the Tauric Diana were awfully celebrated for the offering up of human victims, and so were the Druid groves of Gaul and Britain.

Here, in order to shew from whence our ancestors derived their religious customs, I cannot forbear laying before the Reader an extract from M. Mallett's *Northern Antiquities*, noticed by Mr. Maurice :—

“ We find at this day,” says that writer, “ in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, in the middle of a plain, or

upon some eminence, altars, around which the inhabitants assembled to offer sacrifices, and to assist at other religious ceremonies. The greatest part of these altars are raised upon a little hill, either natural or artificial. Three long pieces of rock, set upright, serve as a basis to a great flat stone, which forms the table of the altar. There is commonly a pretty large cavity under this altar, which might be intended to receive the blood of the victims; and they never fail to find stones for striking fire scattered round it, for no other fire but such as was struck forth with a flint was pure enough for so holy a purpose. Sometimes these rural altars are constructed in a more magnificent manner; a double range of enormous stones surround the altar, and the little hill on which it is erected. In Zealand we see one of this kind, formed of stones of a prodigious magnitude: men would even now be afraid to undertake such a work, notwithstanding all the assistance of the mechanic powers which, in those times, they wanted. What redoubles the astonishment is, that stones of that size are rarely to be seen throughout the island, and that they must have been brought from a great distance."

That by the name Hyperboreans our Druid sages are to be acknowledged, and that the island described by Diodorus out of Hecateus could not be placed in a high northern latitude, Mr. Davies has made very evident in his *Celtic Researches*.—See that Work, p. 176—185.

Mr. Smollett, in a note of his in the first volume of his *History of England*, has attempted to induce the reader's belief that the island of Diodorus must have been one of the *Hebrides*; and he has fixed on the isle of *Harris* in particular, as the large, fertile, and delightful island, so greatly celebrated by the ancient historian! What our English historian has advanced on the subject is seriously defended by some of his countrymen. Mr. Lanne Bu-

chanan has affirmed that the celebrated Abaris was an Hebridian ; and from thence contends for the high state of civilization, in which the inhabitants of the isles of Scotland were, long before the Christian æra !!

The Britons, either according to their different tribes in various parts of the island, or according to their reigning passions, and the objects of their attachment, worshipped various divinities, or the same divinity in a variety of ways. The goddess supposed to preside over vegetation and agriculture was Ceres ; and when the Britons began to pay attention to the labours of husbandry, they paid divine rites to this female divinity, like the Greeks and Romans, who, in honour of her, celebrated the Eleusinian mysteries. Her daughter Proserpine, as queen of the infernal regions, was worshipped by most of the Heathen : but this fictitious divinity was originally no other than life and death personified ; or, according to some, the ark of Noah, which was the means of life to the sacred family, while the rest of the world perished in the waters. Strabo has noticed that, in a small island near to Britain, Ceres and Proserpine were venerated with rites similar to the orgies of Samothrace : under the name of Hecate she presided over the arts of magic and divination. The Britons called her *Llywy*, and *Crairwy* ; and she is assimilated with the *Olwen* of their mythology.

Ceres was the *Ceridwen* of the Druids, and was supposed to preside over the magic cauldron of poetical endowment. The Bards honoured her with oblations of milk, and dew, and acorns, even after the introduction of Christianity. Her mythology, which represents her wandering over the world in quest of her daughter Proserpine, bears a reference to the state of the earth which lay uncultivated for some time after the flood. She is the same as *Rhea* and *Cybele*, and the Egyptian *Isis*, or na-

ture personified; and, in another point of view, agriculture and civilization. Her chariot was drawn by dragons, or winged serpents, creatures esteemed very sacred among the British Druids.

The dragon was the crest of the British monarchs, as the white horse was that of the Anglo-Saxons: hence the beautiful lines of Gray, when celebrating the triumphs of Owen, descended from Cadwalader:—

“ Dauntless on his native sands,  
 “ The dragon-son of Mona stands;  
 “ In glitt’ring arms and glory drest,  
 “ High he rears his ruby crest.”


Bacchus, or Dionusus, was also honoured in Britain. According to Dionysius, in his *Periegesis*, or *Geography*, there were females devoted to his worship, or rather his mad and wanton orgies: “Crowning their brows with ivy, they consumed their nights on the summit of the hills, and rent the air with their frantic cries and shouts of joy.”\* The mixture of volatility and passion in the old Britons, and their fondness for inebriating liquors, with their obstreperous, noisy, and loquacious manner, qualified them for the worship of Bacchus, and the attendant carousals and impure festivities. But the female Bacchanals must have been women of the most abandoned habits. Worshippers of Bacchus, among the male sex, are too plentifully found still, to speak figuratively; but, among our Cambro-British females, we find at least as much modesty as among those of Anglo-Saxon descent.

The history of Bacchus and Osiris has been blended together; and the worship of the former is said to have been introduced into Thrace, under the latter name, by

\* See *Indian Antiquities*.

Orpheus ; and all the superstitions of the Cymry originated in Thrace, as we have before observed. That Bacchus should have female devotees, is accounted for from the following circumstance : in his expedition to the East, he marched at the head of an army composed of women as well as men, all inspired with a divine fury, and armed with the thyrsus, with cymbals, and other musical instruments. His conquests were easy, and without bloodshed ; the people readily submitted, and then elevated to the rank of a god, the hero who taught them the use of the vine, the cultivation of the earth, and the manner of making honey. We hence see how Bacchus became the patron of drunkards ; but he is represented also as sitting on the celestial globe, bespangled with stars, and is then the same as the sun, or the Egyptian Osiris. See *Lempriere's Bibliotheca Classica*.

The ancient Irish, as well as the Britons, were addicted to the worship of Bacchus. The mythologic character among the latter, which answers to him, is *Hu*, (Hee,) the Mighty. This personage was the ideal patriarch of the *Cymry*, who first established them in a civil community ; taught them agriculture, with other useful arts ; and conducted them to the west of Europe. He was the father of Prydain, who consolidated the laws, and fixed their government : he was the *Heus*, or *Hesus*, of the Gauls ; and a very curious stone was found in the last century in France, with a bas-relief of *Heus*, in the act of cutting down a tree, as an emblem of his being the first who taught the cultivation of the earth. A print of this relic, taken from the *Memoirs of the French Academy of Inscriptions*, may be seen annexed to Mr. Roberts's *Ancient History of the Cymry*. It is said of him in the *Triads*, that he was not for possessing lands by fighting and contention, but through justice and peace. He is said to be the first who made poetry the means of pre-



serving science and invention : but what proves him to be a mythological character is the fable of his *Ychain Banog*, or huge oxen ; whereby he drew the *Avanc*, or sea monster, out of the lake or aggregate of waters, which then ceased to overflow the earth. We may easily perceive that this has a reference to the sacrifice of Noah after the deluge, by way of peace-offering for the Divine-visitation, in assuaging the waters, and renovating the world. Here we have the same mixed combination as in the mythology of Bacchus and Osiris, under which names we recognize the patriarch Noah, or those eminent descendants of his who colonized and settled different regions of the renovated globe.

But *Hu* the Mighty, as well as Bacchus, was connected with the worship of the solar luminary ; and thus we are advancing into the subject of the Helio-arkite worship of the ancient Britons, which we shall now endeavour to explain, according to the light which has recently been thrown upon this interesting province of antiquity by some very able mythologists.

*THE WORSHIP AND MYTHOLOGY OF THE  
ANCIENT BRITONS,*

*Particularly investigated in reference to the Helio-arkite  
Superstition.*

THAT our ancestors, like all the Heathen, were particularly devoted to the solar worship, is pretty evident from what has been already advanced in these papers. That the worship of the great luminary of heaven has been one of the earliest sources of false worship is agreed upon by most of the learned ; and Sir Wm. Jones has justly affirmed, that the investigators of ancient mythology trace to this prolific source every other mythological personage, who, like his own light, diverge and radiate from his most glorious centre.

“ We must not be surprised,” says the same eminent writer, “ at finding, on close examination, that the characters of all the Pagan deities, male and female, melt into each other, and at last into one or two ; for it is a well-founded opinion, that the whole crowd of gods and goddesses, in ancient Rome and modern Varanes, (or Benares,) mean only the powers of nature, and principally those of the sun, expressed in a variety of ways, and by a multitude of fanciful names.” *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. I. p. 267.—See also the *Argument of Sir Wm. Jones’s Hymn to Surya*.

As these remarks are just and appropriate in reference to ancient mythology in general, and in particular with respect to that of the Hindus, we shall find them with equal truth and exactness applicable to the mythology of



ancient Britain, which is full as complex as that of India.

The following extract from the *Asiatic Researches* is in proof of the same principle :—

“ Vishnu,” observes Capt. Wilford, “ is undoubtedly one of the epithets of the sun, in whom will be found to merge all the idolatrous machinery of all systems of mythology. Here it must be observed, that at night and in the west, the sun is VISHNU ; he is BRAHMA in the east and in the morning ; from noon to evening he is SIVA.” *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. V. p. 254.

The following extract from the *Hindu Pantheon* is to our purpose :—

“ General Vallancey, whose learned inquiries into the history of Ireland were considered by Sir Wm. Jones as highly interesting, finds that *Krishna*, in Irish, is the sun, as well as in Sanskrit. In his curious little book, *On the Primitive Inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland*, is given an Irish ode to the sun, which I should, untaught, have judged of Hindu origin ; the opening especially— ‘ Auspiciate my lays, O sun ! thou mighty lord of the seven heavens, who swayest the Universe through the immensity of space and matter : ’ and the close, ‘ Thou art the only glorious and sovereign object of universal love, praise, and adoration.’ This is precisely the language of a Saura, (a worshipper of the sun,) be he of Hindustan, or of Hibernia.

“ Again,” continues the same learned writer in the mythology of Ireland, “ *Som* is the deity presiding over plants : he is the same in India ; for the final in *Soma*, lord of plants, (p. 268,) is merely a grammatical termination, and not radical.\* Again, *Arun* is the forerunner

\* It would be well if etymologists always attended to such a necessary distinction in tracing the origin of words ; and in parti-

of the sun, or the dawn; the Aurora both in Irish and Hindu mythology."

But although the solar idolatry was a very early and prevailing superstition, Sir Wm. Jones, as well as other learned persons, have acknowledged, what appears on the very face of all ancient history, that idolatry did not originate from one source. In this, man found out many inventions; and it soon became a very prevalent superstition to pay Divine honours to powerful and virtuous ancestors; especially the founders of kingdoms, legislators, and warriors.

Hence the Celtic nations, from the veneration they conceived for their supposed patriarch, exalted him into a divinity; and the names and appellations bestowed upon him were assimilated with the chief object of their worship: thus, *Hu gadurn*, or *Hu ysgwn*, called also *Aeth* or *Aedd*, *Beli*, &c. was confounded with the worship of the sun. That worship among the Britons, in its mythological principles, was not dissimilar to the mythology of the Greeks and Romans; among whom the worship of the sun was assimilated with certain Divine honours, paid to a personage whom they regarded as the regent of its splendid orb, and who directed the motions of the solar light and heat: hence *Phæbus Apollo*, who drove the chariot of day, was supposed to preside over the powers of harmony and science; *Diana*, or the moon, was his sister; and because this planet rules the night, she was invoked by wizards and sorcerers in all their incantations, works of darkness, fit only for the dead of night. The festivals of the new moon were at one time innocent, and kept in honour of the true God, who formed the heavenly luminaries, as well as all the works of nature.

cular in comparing Greek and Latin names, with those in other languages.

Among the Canaanites the sun was stiled *Baal*, the same as the *Bel* of the Chaldeans, signifying lord or sovereign ; and the moon had the name of Queen of Heaven. *Moloch*, or the king, was no other than the representative of the solar heat, in its consuming quality ; the same as the *Siva* of India, and perhaps the *Saturn* of the Greeks. The horrid rites with which this dæmon-god was worshipped are sufficiently known.

The British Apollo bore the name of *Plennydd*, or the radiant one : he was also called *Beli*, and *Granwŷyn*. *Hu*, or *Heus*, as it denotes that which pervades, was, on account of the import of the term, applied to the all-diffusing influence, and far-darting rays, of the sun ; but more commonly *Huan*, if we may judge from the name being often found among the Bards : hence the word *huanaw* implies to be possessed of poetical endowments. Thus, as before observed, the Britons had a divinity who was both the Sun and Bacchus, similar to other systems of mythology ; and both Bacchus and Osiris were no other than Noah, as we shall find to be true with respect to our Celtic divinity. The Heathen were lost in confused notions ; sometimes they worshipped a multiplicity of inferior gods, and at other times they seemed to worship one deity under various titles.

The Helio-arkite superstition has been treated of at large in Mr. Bryant's *Analysis of Aneient Mythology*. Mr. Faber, in his *Dissertation on the Cabryri*, or the *Great Gods of Greece*, has pursued the same track as his learned predecessor ; and has succeeded in affording the clearest historical demonstration, that the several orgies of Isis, Ceres, Mithras, Bacchus, Rhea, Adonis, and Hecate, are to be deduced from an union of the rites commemorative of the deluge, with the adoration of the host of heaven.

The Rev. Edward Davies, in his elaborate work on

the *Mythology and Rites of the Druids*, has, with great assiduity of research, investigated this subject in reference to the isle of Britain : he has collected and analysed the *disjecta membra*, scattered through ancient British documents, with so much judgment, that his treatise contains a treasure of Celtic literature, when accompanied with his former volume ; and both together, form an important accession to our national antiquities.

By way of introducing the subject now under consideration, as well as to present the Reader with reflections on the polytheism of the ancient Britons, I beg leave to make use of Mr. Davies's words, which appear to be the result of much deep thinking :—

“ Druidism was a system of superstition composed of heterogeneous principles ; it acknowledges certain divinities under a great variety of names and attributes : these divinities were originally nothing more than deified mortals and material objects, mostly connected with the history of the deluge ; but, in the progress of error, they were regarded as symbolized by the sun, the moon, and certain stars ; which, in consequence of this confusion, were venerated with Divine honours.

“ And this superstition apparently arose from the gradual or accidental corruption of the patriarchal religion, by the abuse of certain commemorative honours, which were paid to the ancestors of the human race, and by the admixture of Sabian idolatry.”

In opposition to all this, it has been averred by some late writers, that the Druids held the unity of God, notwithstanding the evidence that we have in the ancients respecting their polytheism. Whatever some of the Druid Bards may have held as philosophers, it matters not ; nor do we wish to deny, that they retained some glimmerings of traditional truth respecting the nature of the Great Supreme. But this does not prove

them to be worshippers of the true God, any more than some fine passages in Xenophon, Tully, or Seneca, can be brought to prove, that the Greeks and Romans were not idolaters. If ever the Druids professed the worship of the one true God, I would say, with the author before cited, "that they must be understood, in the sense of other heathens, who occasionally declared, that their multitude of false gods really constituted but one character, and not as implying that they worshipped one God, and Him alone."

"That they had no knowledge or recollection," adds our author, "of the great First Cause, I will not venture to assert. I have some reason to conclude, that they did acknowledge his existence, and his Providence : but they saw him faintly, through the thick veil of superstition ; and their homage and adoration were almost wholly engrossed by certain supposed agents of a subordinate nature."

The testimony of Cæsar alone is sufficient evidence on this subject ; and our old historian Gildas, says, that the Britons had so many objects of superstitious worship, that they exceeded, if possible, the Egyptians ; and that in particular they paid divine honours to mountains and rivers.' This point has been well argued by Mr. Whitaker, in reply to M<sup>c</sup>Pherson, who might with equal justice have affirmed, that his Caledonians worshipped no divinity whatever, as that they acknowledged the one true God, for we have no reference to a Supreme Being in any of the fragments of Ossian. But it is possible for antiquaries to be carried away with a sort of fanaticism, that would lead them to exalt their national ancestors above the level of all other people.

They may thus give up truth and consistency, rather than admit any thing to the disparagement of their remote progenitors, even in the most rude and uncultivated state of society.

*Proofs of the Arkite or Diluvian Superstition  
among the Britons.*

A very plain and striking evidence, that our ancestors retained an ancient tradition of the universal deluge among them, appears from the mythological account of *Hu Gadarn* in the Triads, and to which we have already referred. Among the three awful calamities of the isle of Britain, the first mentioned is, the bursting of the great lake, and the consequent overwhelming of all lands, so that all mankind were drowned, excepting *Dwyfan* and *Dwyfach*, who escaped in a naked ship, that is, a vessel without sails; and from them the isle of Britain was repopled.

In another Triad, we have the three chief master works of the isle of Britain, of which the first was, the ship of *Nerydd Nav Neizion*, (the celestial one, the lord of the waters,) which carried in it a male and a female of all living, when the lake of waters burst forth.

The second great achievement was, the drawing of the *arange*, or monster of the deep, to land, out of the lake of waters, by the oxen of *Hu Gadarn*, so that the lake burst no more.

The third subject of this Triad is, the stones of *Gwyddon Ganhebon* or *Thoth*, on which were read the arts and sciences of the world: so that this as well as the two former articles are pure mythology.

In these two Triads, we have a curious traditional piece of mythology relative to the universal deluge, when all mankind are stated to have been destroyed, excepting one man and one woman, with one male and female of every species of animals. The names of the two survivors of the human race imply divinity: *Dwyvan*, the eminent divine person; *Dwyvach*, the lesser divinity.

These names, it is remarkable, were given to the two fountains of the *Dee*, which the Welsh call *Dw'rdwy*, (Durdy) or divine water; and the Nayad of the contiguous lake or Bala pool, was called *Tegid*, or beautiful. It appears evident, from the discrepancy of these memorials with the exact record of the inspired volume, that they could not be fabricated after the introduction of the Christian religion. Instead of a family of eight persons, here only two are mentioned; and that it was not borrowed from the Grecian fable of Deucalion's flood, appears from the peculiarity of drawing the monster out of the lake by means of the oxen of *Hu Gadarn*, whereby the recurrence of that dreadful calamity was prevented.

This ancient piece of mythology seems to imply something of a grand triumph obtained over that evil demon, who was feigned to be the agent of the world's destruction; or it may refer to the drying up of the superfluous moisture, by means of the air and the solar heat. Oxen were sacred to the sun; and to *Heus*, when worshipped as the representative of that luminary. But another view may be taken of this subject: this fable may have originated in the landing of the patriarch and his three sons from the ark, as the same word in Hebrew does; and perhaps in some other ancient tongues, may denote a leader or prince as well as an ox.

We see in the Triad under consideration, as well as in some others, that sentiment of national importance which marked the primordial Britons, in making their own island to be the seat of so many great events in the primitive world; unless we suppose, that when these traditions were first committed to writing, the confusion was then made, in representing the isle of Britain to be the scene of those wonders.

In the same Triad, which speaks of the bursting of the great lake, there is mention also of a terrible fire, or most

destructive volcano, when the earth, it is said, split asunder to its centre, and the greatest part of all living was consumed. But this, in all probability, is a confused account of the old tradition of different nations respecting the final conflagration of the world, a subject which we have already noticed.

The mythology of all nations is full of allusions to the universal deluge, and none more so than that of the Hindûs. *Vishnu*, the preserver, is not only considered as the regent of the sun, but as the divinity who presides over the ocean. In the Hindû pantheon we have a beautiful plate, which delineates him as stretched upon the waters. The tale of the churning of the ocean, and the mountain Merû, is a singular piece of mythology; and the sacred emblem of a boat recurs among their paintings and sculptures on various occasions.

The oxen of *Hu*, whereby he is feigned to have performed the feat of drawing the destructive animal out of the waters, were of course deemed sacred; and in the writings of the Bards, the sacred ox or bull is spoken of with the highest veneration. The name of this sacred animal was *ELGAN*, or supremely fair; and there is reason to believe that such an animal was preserved as an object of idolatrous worship, like the Egyptian Apis.

Our Celtic patriarch, as the object of idolatrous worship, had various names and appellations given him, just as we find that the Scandinavian Odin had twelve titles assigned him. *Hi*, *Hu*, *He*, or, as the Romans latinized the name, *Heus* and *Hesus*, and at other times *Esus*, appears to have been the appropriate name of the supreme divinity among the Gauls and Britons; but this name being given to the ideal patriarch of the Celtic tribes, the Aborigines of our island fancied, that it was this personage who conducted the first settlers to Britain, and taught them agriculture, and gave them laws. *Hu* was also the



name of the solar luminary as the object of worship, *Huan* being the ancient name of the sun, probably prior to that of *Haul* (Haile), which comes from the same root as the Greek *Helios*. The attributes of Apollo, Bacchus, and Mars, were frequently ascribed to this principal object of Celtic veneration. His most general symbol was the bull, one while the representative of agriculture, and at another time bearing manifest allusion to the celestial sign *Taurus*; while, from the well-known fierceness of this animal, he denoted the prowess of the warrior, and the fury of battle. Hence the Britons gave to their great generals the name of Bulls of battle.

The name *Huon* is applied by some of the Bards as a name of the divinity, and is of the same import as *Hu*. Mr. Wm. Owen in his dictionary, so often referred to, considers that latter name as an epithet of the Deity, with respect to the Divine omniscience. "The hound," he observes, "on account of his quick scent, was adopted as the common emblem of this attribute, and which, if we may rely on some authors, became an object of idolatrous worship; for he is unquestionably identified in the *Heus* of Gaul, and the *Anubis* of Egypt."

In one of the poems of a Welsh Bard of the middle ages, Iolo, the laureat of the famous chieftain Owen Glyndore, we meet with a singular strain of idolatrous adulation, addressed to *Hu Gadarn*, or the mighty *Heus*. The Bard describes him in a manner that suits no real character, but that of the patriarch Noah, and him regarded as more than mortal. *Hu Gadarn* is there stiled the distributor of wine, and the giver of renown; the emperor of land and sea, and the life of the whole world. He is represented as the father of agriculture, being the first who, after the flood, held the strong beamed plough, and thus honoured that science above every other.

When we see such expressions in a Bard of the four-

teenth century, we can do no less than consider them as traces of an ancient mythology, preserved to that period by the successors of the Druid Bards, in Wales, who perhaps are no more liable to censure for their allusions to Celtic mythology, than our Cowley's, our Milton's, and our Thompson's, for their continual references to the mythology of Greece and Rome.

One of the Bards of the fourteenth century bestows the epithet of deity on *Hu Gadarn*, whom he impiously describes as the greatest object of praise and confidence, stiling him the supreme lord, and the mysterious deity. See Owen, article HU, and Davies's *Mythology*, p. 108.

Hu is often addressed under the names of *Ædd*, or *Æddon*, and *Aeron*; and he seems to be confounded with *Prydain*, although at other times sufficiently distinguished from him. He was *Gwair*, or the righteous man, who was confined in the prison of *Caer Sidi*, or the ark, and is then discriminated from the great Supreme, who exerted his power over the shores of the world. The most ancient idolatry did not consist in the total renunciation of the one true God, so much as in associating inferior agents with Him in the government of the world, and paying to them a share of the divine honour due to Jehovah alone.

*Deon*, or the distributor, was another name given to the diluvian deity; and he is also called *Dylan ail Ton*, or Dylan, son of the wave. This the classical reader may be disposed to regard as no other than the Greek *Deucalion* abbreviated.

*Nevydd Nav Neivion*, or the celestial lord Neivion, was one of his special titles, as the builder of the sacred ship; and in this point of view he was worshipped under the name of *Neptune*, the marine deity. The horse was sacred to him; and that animal, by a curious blunder, became the symbol of Neptune.

*Hu* is often blended with *Beli*, who is denominated the roaring *Beli*; hence Britain, which is called the island of *Hu*, is also called the island of *Beli*, a manifest proof that the same personage is designed. As there was among the Greeks a demon-god, who went under the name of *Mars Dionusus*; so Mars, with Dionysus or Bacchus, coalesce in the conjunction of *Hu* and *Beli*.\*

The worship of the sun was always connected with sacred groves, and sacred fountains; and a superstitious veneration for the latter has hardly yet ceased, in some instances. We know what veneration the Hindûs have for the Ganges, and how the ancient Egyptians paid divine honours to the Nile. Wherever the diluvian superstition prevailed, great partiality was evinced for certain lakes and rivers, bays, promontories, and islands. The island of Mona is well known as the favourite resort of the Druids, and was particularly devoted to the wor-

\* BACCHUS had various names assigned him; for, according to *Ausonius*, Bacchus, Osiris, Phanac, Dionusus, Liber, and Adonis, were the same deity.

Ogygia me Bacchum vocat;  
Osirim Ægyptus putat,  
Mysi Phanacem nominant;  
Dionuson Indi existimant;  
Romana sacra Liberum,  
Arabica gens Adoneum.

FABER, Vol. I. p. 155.

Virgil, in describing the *Sibyl*, or prophetess to whom Æneas applied, has these expressions:

At Phœbi nondum patiens immanis in antro  
Bacchatur vates, magnum si pectore possit,  
Excussisse Deum.

The word *Bacchatur* is there applied to the sacred fury which possessed the *Sibyl*. On this the commentator remarks; Bene *Bacchatur*. Idem enim est Apollo qui Liber Pater, qui Sol. Unde in eorum sacris erat Phœbadum Baccharumque conventus.

ship of the demon-god, the British Bacchus; hence, it was called the island of the praise of *Hu*. In other places, he was probably worshipped more as the solar luminary, especially in the grand circular temple on Salisbury plain. The favourite object of idolatry varied in different situations, or in respect to the dispositions and pursuits of different persons.

The island of *Hi*, afterwards known under the name of *Iona*, the residence of the Culdees, appears to have been as sacred a spot to the Northern Druids as *Mona* was to ours. The very name bespeaks this, for it is no other than that of the old Celtic patron god of the Druid Bards; *Hi* and *Hu* being only a different mode of writing a word, which is pronounced the same by the Highlanders and the Welsh, as if written *Hee*. The Isle of Man, called also *Mona*, was a noted seat of superstition, and famous for its enchantments. All our islets and promontories were considered sacred in ancient times.

As to sacred fountains, to use the words of M. Mallet, "the people long continued to repair in crowds to them, in order to adore the beneficial genius who made the waters flow: they covered them with flowers and presents; and poured out libations." This kind of devotion, retained from the times of heathenism, I have witnessed myself. These remains of superstition respecting woods and fountains, are with difficulty eradicated from the minds of old people and children, in certain places.

The Britons had their different festivals to celebrate the various seasons of the year, adoring the powers supposed to preside over nature; and then the common people gave themselves up not only to mirth and jollity, but to obscenity and debauchery: it is for this cause, and not merely for their erroneous sentiments of the Divine nature, that the true God has always declared His indignation against the heathen. It was not simply for their

idolatries, however insulting to the Majesty of the only real Object of worship, that Jehovah took such severe vengeance of the Canaanites, but because of the dreadful impurities, and diabolical practices, so intimately blended with their superstitions.

At November and May, or Calan Gaiav and Calan Mai, that is, on the eve preceding the first day of the respective months, the Britons had their circular dances, and their beacons were fired in honour of the sun: at the latter season, they had their *Bedvan*, or May pole, erected and hung with garlands in honour of the spring, and the powers of nature. I shall throw a veil over the result of those festivities, as they were anciently celebrated in different nations, and to this day in India. I refer the reader to the Indian antiquities, Vol. VI. p. 87. 89.

I subjoin the following remarks from Mr. Toland: "On May eve the Druids made prodigious fires on these Carns, which being every one in sight of some other, could not but afford a glorious show over a whole nation. These fires were in honour of Beal, or Bealan, latinized by the Romans into Belenus, by which name the Gauls and their colonies understood the sun: and therefore to this hour, the first day of May is, by the Ab-original Irish, called LA BEALTEINE, or *the day of Belin's fire*. May-day is likewise called LA BEALTEINE by the Highlanders of Scotland, who are no contemptible part of the Celtic offspring. So it is in the Isle of Man: and in Armoric, a priest is still called BELEC, or the servant of BEL, and the priesthood BELEGIETH." Thus, Mr. Toland in his history of Druidism, as cited by Mr. Maurice, Ind. Antiq. Vol. VI.

At this season the sun entered into Taurus, or the constellation of the bull, which connects the worship of the great Demon-god of Britain with Astronomy; *Hæ* being worshipped under the symbol of a Bull, in his celestial

character of the solar luminary, as well as in his terrestrial character of Bacchus, or the Patron of Agriculture. It may be truly said of polytheism, what Shakespeare so finely says of the poetical genius, when the vigorous fancy roams abroad through all nature; that, in its frenzies, "it rolls from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;" if the words of Milton be not more appropriate to the case of the heathen world, that "they find no end in wandering mazes lost." There can be nothing but wild confusion, when truth is abandoned; and man loses himself in the mazes of his own refinements and vagaries.

As the cuckoo announces the arrival of the spring, and the approach of May, he was deemed a propitious bird; reminding the infatuated Britons of their grand festival, which was probably observed with different rites in different parts of the country. The celebration of this festival, in the neighbourhood of great lakes, and on the sea-shore, was attended with those rites, that fully prove the Britons to have been devoted to the diluvian mysteries. By certain scenic representations, which appear to have been kept up long after the establishment of Christianity, the memorial of the deluge and the renovation of the world was commemorated. The most solemn scene of this kind was on the shores of the Cardigan bay. Tradition states, that the space which is covered by that bay, was at one time a fine lowland district with many flourishing towns in it, to the number of sixteen; the best of all the towns and cities of Wales, excepting Caerleon, the Silurian capital. The name of the Prince of this country, at the time when this calamity is said to have happened, is called *Gwyddnaw Garanhir*. The manner in which this fell out, was by means of one *Seithinen*, the son of *Seithin Sadi*, king of Dyved, or Pembrokeshire: this person at a time of public festivity, in a fit of intoxication,

let in the sea, so that the whole country called *Cantre'r gwaelod* was overflowed. This was in the reign of Emrys the sovereign, which, if considered as an historical fact, must have been in the fifth century. The persons who escaped this dreadful catastrophe came to land in the country of *Ardudwy*, in the region of *Arvon*, and in the mountains of *Snowden* and other places, which had hitherto been uninhabited.

Such is the account we have in the Triads; and this is one of the instances where history and mythology are confounded. Something of a similar kind is that legend in Brecknockshire, respecting the lake of Savaddan, which, as tradition reports, now occupies the site of a large town. *Llyn Tegid*, near Bala, a famous mere, is also the subject of a mythological tale.

That so large a space of country should be so suddenly overflowed, by the sea-dams and sluices being left open at a time of festivity, is a tale highly absurd, and evidently fictitious. Mr. Davies has investigated the particulars of it, and he very properly resolves the whole into pure Arkite mythology; and this is very obvious from the name of the Prince, for *Gwyddnaw* implies the sage or priest of the ship, and *Garanhir* the lofty crane, an appropriate title for a Druid priest.

Mr. Davies has observed, that this account cannot be authentic history, for the present Cardigan bay existed in the time of Ptolemy; but neither he, nor any other ancient geographer, takes any notice of those sixteen cities, which are said to have been situated on that coast previous to the supposed inundation. Besides, there never were sixteen towns or cities in all the territories of Wales, which could bear the slightest competition with *Caerleon*, such as it was in the age referred to.

“ The landing of those that escaped from this drowned country, upon the mountains of *Snowden*, is like the

landing of Deucalion upon Mount Parnassus. It is not history, but mythology. The district of Snowden, from the remotest period of British mythology, was famous for Arkite memorials. Here was the city of *Emrys*, or the Ambrosial city: this was also called the city of *Pharaon*, or the higher powers; that is, the *Baalim* or Arkite Patriarchs. Here the dragons were concealed, in the time of *Beli* (the solar deity), and in the time of *Prydain*, the son of *Ædd the Great*, a mystical personage of the same family. As dragons were harnessed in the car of the British *Kêd*, as well as in that of *Ceres*, the concealing of these animals in a city of the higher powers, must imply an establishment of her mysteries."

The following passage I add, not only in reference to the present subject, but as illustrative of our national history: "The land of *Gwyddnaw* is said to have been inundated in the time of *Emrys*, the sovereign. This is the personage, from whom the temple of *Stonehenge*, as well as the sacred city in Snowden, derived its name. If the Britons of the fifth century had a monarch who bore this title, we can only say that, like his successors *Uthyr* and *Arthur*, he was complimented with a name out of the mythology of the Druids; and that the age of *Emrys* was any age which acknowledged the Helio-arkite superstition."

This coast afforded a grand situation for initiating aspirants into the mysterious rites, connected with the history of the deluge. Even after the establishment of Christianity, certain superstitious practices might be still retained, under the pretext of their being mere commemorative rites, or only connected with the ceremonies of Bardism, as a poetical and literary institution.

From ancient poems still extant, and recently published in the Welsh archæology, we collect some very curious and interesting particulars, respecting the celebration of



the Arkite mysteries. The curious may gratify themselves by consulting the appendix to Mr. Davies's volume, on the mythology of the Druids.

The history of the birth of *Taliesin* is evidently nothing else than a piece of mythology; he is said to have been exposed when an infant, and to have been found and brought up by *Elphin*, to whom he has addressed some of his poems. He was discovered at the drawing of *Gwydno's* wear between Dyvi and Aberystwith, on *May-eve*; at which season it was usual to draw the wear, and obtain prizes to a great amount: but at this junction *Elphin* was supposed to be very unfortunate, having taken nothing but this infant, who was denominated *Taliesin*, and who is said soon after to have composed a poem to console his patron for his ill-luck, assuring him that he ought to consider this Bardic infant as a greater prize than a hundred others. Thus is represented the mystical initiation of the Bard. See *Hanes Taliesin*, or the history of *Taliesin*, which I have given in the Appendix.

The scenic representation of the deluge, after which the novice was considered as having completed his probation, is described at large in the poems ascribed to *Taliesin* and other Bards; several of which Mr. Davies has translated.

In those mystic diluvian rites, the Aspirant was put into a coracle, and conducted across the bay to a reef of rocks, (perhaps that called *Sarn Badrig*, or such like situation,) which was regarded as the sacred mount, commemorative of the patriarch's landing from the ark. After encountering the billows, and returning safe to the shore, he was admitted as perfectly graduated into the Bardic mysteries, having before undergone various penances, and passed through the necessary stages of probation. All these *Taliesin* describes in his mystical and allegorical manner. The shrine of the Arkite deity was drawn

along the shore by oxen, and the patriarch himself was personated by one of the priests, while the whole was attended with the most frantic shouts, dancing, and every species of jollity.

Several small islands or holmes were considered sacred, as being deemed appropriate scenes for celebrating those Arkite ceremonies; and on some of them there were sanctuaries and priests continually resident.

An ancient poem, translated by Mr. Davies, seems to have been designed as a description of the grand festival of our British Bacchanals; setting forth the Bards' lamentation, that those festivities had been interrupted (either by the coming over of the Saxons, and the troubles occasioned thereby, or the prevalence of Christianity.) The Bard is very doleful, on account of the wounding of the mystical bull, or the tauriform deity, the British Bacchus. The conclusion of that part of the poem is remarkable: "On the strand, where men were assembled in the pit of conflict, *Brán*, (the raven, and also a proper name), has pierced thee in wrath." This, in all probability, is an allusion to the successful endeavours of the Christian clergy to proscribe heathenish superstitions.

In all the ancient fragments of British mysticism, the symbol of the bull, as well as that of the dragon, continually recurs. In the Triads we have frequent allusions of that kind; so that upon the whole, comparing this circumstance with the general principles of Heathen mythology, what Dionysius says concerning the orgies of Bacchus in Britain is amply confirmed. The whole history of Bacchus is full of allusion to the symbols of the bull, and the serpent. Euripides introduces a chorus of Bacchantes inviting him to appear in the shape of a bull, a dragon, or a lion:

Φανηδι ταυρος, η πολυκρανος γ' ιδειν  
 Δρακων, η πυριφλεγων  
 Ορασθαι λεων  
 Ιδ' ω Βακχε.—

And thus the author of the orphic hymns styles him,  
 “The deity with two horns, having the head of a bull;  
 even Mars Dionusus, revered in a double form, and  
 adored in conjunction with a beautiful star.”

Κικλησχω Διονυσον, εριξρομον ευασερα,  
 Πρωτογονον, διφυη, τριγονον, Βακχαιον ανακτα,  
 Αγριον, αρρητον, κρυφιον, δικερωτα, διμορφον,-  
 Κισσοξρυον, ταυρωπον, Αρηιον, ευιον, αγνον.

For the same reason, as Mr. Faber observes, Plutarch enquires, why the women of Elis were accustomed to invoke Bacchus in the words of the following hymn :

“Come, hero Dionusus, to thy holy temple on the sea-shore ; come, heifer-footed deity, to thy sacrifice, and bring the graces in thy train ! hear us, O bull, worthy of our veneration ; hear us, O illustrious bull !”

After attempting to solve this question in a variety of different ways, he concludes with asking, whether the title of *bull* might not be given to Bacchus, on account of his being the inventor and patron of agriculture. Faber, Vol. I. p. 193.

That Bacchus, or Dionusus, was one of the titles given to the patriarch Noah, in the Heathen world, Mr. Faber has amply proved. In *Ogygia*, which was no other country than Ireland, the name of *Bacchus* was known : General Vallancey says, that the ancient Irish called this deity *Ce Bacche*, or the illustrious Bacchus.

The river Dee, called by the Welsh *Dwrdwy*, or the divine water, was a great object of superstitious veneration. The two fountains which form its source, issuing

out of Bala Pool, or *Llyn Tegid*, were called *Dwyvan*, and *Dwyvach*, the names of the sacred couple who escaped from the waters of the deluge. *Tegid* appears to have been an epithet of the great patriarch; the lake was sacred, as a symbol of the waters of the universal deluge; and near at hand we have the sacred mount, where the renovation of the world was celebrated; the name of the town *Bala*, implying a shooting forth or springing up, in allusion to the issuing up of the two streams out of the lake, and which we see were regarded in a mythological sense.

That tumulus at *Mold*, in Flintshire, from whence the Welsh gave the town the name of *Wydd-grûg*, or the *conspicuous mount*, was also devoted most probably to purposes of superstition. Many other similar situations might be pointed out.

The following extracts, from an ancient poem translated, and intituled, *Marwnad Uthyr Pendragon*, is exceeding curious, as illustrative of the abominations of the old Cymro-Britons :

Dignified on the covered Mount,  
 O Hu with expanded wings,  
 Has been thy son, thy Bardic proclaimer,  
 Thy deputy, O Father Deon :  
 My voice has recited the death song,  
 Where the stone work is  
 The intrenchment of the world ;  
 Let the countenance of Prydain, the splendid  
 Hu, communicate his impulse.  
 O Ruler of heaven, my message reject not.  
 At the grand festivity round the two lakes,  
 The lake on my side,  
 Siding to the inclosure ;  
 The inclosure invoking,  
 The King being traced,  
 The fair one retreats upon the veil,

Covering the huge stones;  
 The DRAGON moves round  
 Over the places, where are  
 The vessels of drink-offering;  
 The drink-offering in the golden horns;  
 The golden horns are in the hand,  
 The hand on the knife,  
 The knife on the chief victim:  
 Sincerely I invoke thee,  
 O victorious Beli,  
 And the sovereign Man-Hogan,  
 To preserve the honours of  
 The honey island of Beli!

We here may see a representation of the worship offered to the British Bacchus, with a plain allusion to the dragon as his symbol; while the connection between this demon-god and the sun is evident, from the titles which are given him. The ceremonies mentioned by the Bard, were performed on some very grand occasion; the place of celebration being on the sacred mount, within the stone circle and mound, which was symbolical of the world, and near the consecrated lakes.

“At this time,” says Mr. Davies, “the huge stones of the temple were covered with a veil, on which was delineated the history of the dragon king. There seems also to have been a living dragon or serpent, as a symbol of the god, who is described as gliding from place to place, and tasting the drink-offering in the sacred vessels.”

We may observe, that Britain being here called the island of *Beli*, and in other places the island of *Hu*, it is evident that both names formed the same object of idol worship. The title of the poem, *Marwnad Uthyr Pendragon*, that is, the elegy, or funeral dirge of *Uthyr*, the supreme commander, would at first sight induce us to regard it as an historical piece: but, under that cover, the semi-christian Bard deplores the decay of his

favourite institution, and the destruction of druidic rights, by the prevalence of Christianity.

That very ancient poem, intituled *The praise of LUD THE GREAT*, gives the name of Cadwalader, or Supreme ruler of battle, to the diluvian patriarch : he also is called *MENWYD*, or the blessed ; but that name, among the Bards, seems to designate poetical endowment, and brightness of intellect.\* He is invoked, “as the dragon-chief of the world, who formed the curvatures of *Kêd*, (that is, the ark,) which passed the dale of grievous water, having the forepart stored with corn, and mounted aloft with the connected serpents.”

In the same poem, the Bard sets forth the high importance of Druidism, and its ceremonies :—

“Without the *ape*, without the *stall of the cow*, without the *mundane rampart*, the world will become desolate, not requiring the cuckoos to convene the appointed dance over the green.”

In this poem the Bard ridicules the Christians, and the rite of baptism ; and predicts that neither they, nor the Saxons, shall obtain their wish of desolating the Druid sanctuaries.

That the Gauls, as well as the Britons, were much addicted to the worship of Bacchus, under the symbol of the bull, appears from the following account :—They had a brazen bull, which they greatly venerated ; and when the Cimbri, Teutones, and Ambrones, were subdued by the

\* *Menw*, *Menyw*, or *Menwyd*, is spoken of as an important character in ancient mythology ; and his attributes agree with those of Indian Menû : he was one of the primary legislators, and was one of the three who so eminently possessed the power of fascination and enchantment. He is said to have first expressed in writing the sacred character denoting the three primitive rays of light ; which is also expressive of the Deity. *Menu*, signifies to impress, or imprint ; *Menyw*, mind, intellect.

Romans, it was by this brazen idol that they were sworn to observe the articles of capitulation, which the Romans granted them. After their defeat, Catulus ordered this bull to be carried to his own house, there to remain as the most glorious monument of his victory. "This god," says Dr. Borlase, "is ranked with Jupiter, Esus, and Vulcan, being called *Tarvos Trigaranus*, from three cranes perching, one on his head, one on the middle of his back, and the third on his hinder parts." See Borlase, B. 2. ch. 16. p. 109. Faber, Vol. I. p. 211.

Dr. Borlase here refers to the square stone found in the cathedral of Paris in 1711, and described by Montfaucon, Tom. II. p. 424., where this *Tarvos Trigaranus* has the fourth front allotted to it. Here, with Mr. Davies, I can do no less than observe, that the people who named the bull, spoke a language very similar to our Cambro-British; for *Tarw Trigaran* is Welsh for a bull with three cranes. And the idol itself seems connected with British superstition; the chief priest who attended the Arkite mysteries being stiled *Garan hir*, the lofty crane: hence the three cranes may have represented three priests.

The oxen and bulls mentioned in the Triads, there is reason to believe, have all a mythological allusion. The oxen of *Hu Gadarn* have been already noticed; there are also the three bulls of battle (*Tri tharw cād*), and the three bull sovereigns (*Tri tharw unben*). The first of these mystical bulls, according to Davies, is no other than *Hu Gadarn*, the Bacchus, and Apollo, (as well as the Mars,) of the Britons, under the title of *Cād Gaddug*, mistaken by the collectors of the Triads in the middle ages for sovereigns.

This bull of battle may be recognized, as the same author observes, on some of the ancient altars remaining in Britain. The Bards sometimes introduce *Mohyn* or

*Möyn*, for *Tarw*, a bull. Therefore Moyn Cád is synonymous with *Tarw Cád*, bull of battle : and Camden has copied two inscriptions, *Deo Moganti Cád*, and *Deo Mouno Cád*. It would appear from hence, adds our ingenious antiquary, that our bull of battle was publicly acknowledged as a god, in the ages when the Romans occupied Britain ; and, consequently, that the Heliorkite god of the Britons was venerated under the title and form of a bull.—*Mythology of the Druids*, p. 132—134.

That tauriform idol was called *Elgan*, or the supremely fair ; and it does not appear that the Britons had any other representation of him than the living animal itself. This appears from the fate which befel the British *Apis*, by the righteous zeal of the Christians, deplored by the Heathen-Christian Bards, Taliesin and Merddin. They complain that the grey stones of their sacred places were removed. “ Soon is Elgan and his retinue discovered for his slaughter, how great the vengeance that ensued.” This Elgan, the master of the fair herd, seems to have been the symbol of *Hu* ; and the fate that befel him plainly shews that he was a living animal. “ The silver ones,” that is, the hoary Druid Bards, “ protected him as long as they were able.”

The ancient poem intituled CADAR TEYRN ON, or the chair of the sovereign On, is full of the Druidic fire-worship and solar worship ; and indeed the very title carries us in thought to the grand font of idolatry—Egypt.

The first stanza translated by Mr. Davies :—

“ The declaration of the luminous strain of the unbounded Awen (Bardic muse) concerning the person of two origins, of the race of AL ADUR, (from the Hebrew אל אדר, the glorious god) with his divining staff, and his pervading glance, and his neighing coursers, and his regulator of kings, and his potent number, and his blushing



purple, and his vaulting over the boundary, and his appropriate chair amongst the established train. Lo, he is come from the firm inclosure, (or strong boundary, meaning the firmament,) with the light-coloured bounding steeds, even the sovereign ON, the ancient, the generous feeder, the third profound object of the sage, to pronounce the blessing upon Arthur."

Mr. Davies conjectures, that by the solar god's vaulting over the boundary, the Bard intended his crossing the equator. This may have been represented, he supposes, by some mystic rite, especially at that grand festive dance in honour of Apollo, every nineteenth year, the term of the solar cycle.

I shall give one extract more from another poem, which affords indubitable proof that "the Magi of Britain" worshipped the sun, under the name and character of fire :

*Torrid anwynudawl  
Tushtawl DAN iogawl  
Ef iolen, O dduch lawr!  
Tân, Tân! hustin Gwawr! &c.*

Let him burst forth with rapid speed,  
The moving, the vehement fire :  
Even he whom we adore, high above the earth :  
The FIRE, The FIRE! whispers Aurora.  
He is high above the lofty gale,  
High above every element,  
Of vast bulk is his courser :  
He will not delay in the skirmish,  
Nor at the wedding feast of Llyr; [the sea]  
Thy path in the sea is perceived,  
Thy impulse in the mouth of rivers.  
The smiling dawn repels the gloom :  
At the dawn, at his ardent hour,  
At every meet season ;  
At the meet season of his turnings,  
At the four stages of his course,

I will extol him who judges the violent,

\* *Strong in the tumult*—Dreadful his wrath!

*The worship of CERIDWEN, the British Ceres.*

THE British KED, or CERIDWEN, is in many respects the same character as the *Ceres* of the Greek mythology, and the *Isis* of the Egyptians. She had a daughter of the name of *Llywy*, or *Llai*; or, as she is at other times called, *Creirwy*. As the worship of Bacchus and Ceres were so nearly allied, the Britons had their Bacchus, the patron of Agriculture and the giver of wine; as well as a female personage to represent the fecundity of nature. The one was symbolized by a bull or ox, and to the other the cow was sacred. Both of these have a reference to the deluge, and *Kéd* is frequently regarded as a personification of the ark. *Ceres* had her chariot drawn by flying dragons, and so had the British *Kéd*; but her daughter *Llywy* engrossed a great share of the superstitious veneration of the Druids, and she is sometimes to be considered as a personification of their mysteries.

According to Owen, *Ceridwen*, or *Cyridwen*, was a female personage in the mythology of the Britons, considered the first of womankind, having nearly the same attributes with Venus, “in whom is personified the generative powers.” But the Venus of the Britons, more appropriately, appears to have been *Olwen*, the fair goddess of nature, “in whose every footstep four white trefails spring up.” She was the object of the amours of the hero Culhwch: and her appearance is thus described in one of the old dramatic tales—“She was arrayed in a

\* *Cadarn trydar*:—this may imply the same with Taliesin's *Rhwyv trydar*, lord or leader of the din, applied to the sun; from which it is to be inferred, that the Druids welcomed his risings with frantic shouts of joy, accompanied with music and singing.

vesture of flame-coloured silk ; a strong wreath of ruddy gold was about the damsel's neck, wherein was set a precious pearl, and rows of coral ; yellower was her hair than the blossoms of the broom ; her skin was whiter than the foam of the wave ; her hands and fingers were fairer than the opening buds of the water-lily, amid the small ripplings of the fountain of waters ; or the sight of the hawk after mewing, or the sight of the falcon of three mews, no brighter eyes than her's were seen : whiter was her bosom than the breast of the fair swan ; redder her cheeks than the rose of the mountain ; whoever saw her was filled with love : four white trefoils were seen to rise in her way wherever she came, and therefore was she named *Olwen*, or the fair lady."

As to *Ceridwen*, her worship was connected with that of the moon, as that of *Hu gadurn*, the Arkite patriarch, the great husbandman, was blended with the solar luminary. Hence the lunette or half-moon was worn as an ornament by the Druids, as we see on the Carnbre coins in Dr. Borlase : if it does not equally represent the boat, or the sacred vessel in which the righteous family were preserved.\*

But the peculiar character of *Ceridwen* was her presidency over the magic cauldron, or the liquor of renovation, which it was requisite should be heated for a year and a day. This, in one point of view, might represent the term of the deluge ; and in another, the doctrines and institutes of Bardism : for whoever tasted of this ambrosia, that is, became initiated, he was illuminated with the light of science ; and he received that mental vigour, whereby his intellectual powers were made capable of comprehending all mysteries.

\* The symbol of a boat is very frequent in the mythology, both of the eastern and the western nations.

In a poem of Taliesin, intituled, the chair or presidency of Taliesin, the ingredients of the mystical cauldron are described, all having a reference to the various rites of Druidism. Among these are the *Gwlidd* or *Samolus*, the *Vervain*, a plant called the golden pipes of *Llen*, the *flux-wort*, the *ptimrose*, the *trefoil*, and others, considered sacred and emblematical by the Druids; as bearing some kind of mystical allusion.

*Kêd* is sometimes confounded with *Llâd*, or *Latona*; and her magic cauldron was attended by nine damsels, who are said to have their general residence in the bosom of lakes, from whence the various legendary fairy tales: but as *Kêd* was the patron of the bards, the nine damsels may be thought to bear analogy to the nine muses of the Greeks.

The father of *Kêd*, or *Keridwen*, was *Tegid*; and her husband was *Morvran*, Raven of the sea, respecting whom see the history of Taliesin's initiation.

The great sanctuary of the British Ceres, as the genius of the ark, was in *Caer y Gyrylchi* among the Snowden mountains, celebrated for arkite memorials. These were the sacred cells where the Aspirants underwent their penances, and completed their term of discipline, until at the season of the solemn festival, and scenic representation of the deluge, they were placed in the sacred coracle, and landed on the mount of renovation.

These mysteries were not utterly forgotten at so late a period as the eleventh century, as appears from the poetic strains of Owen Prince of North Wales, of Cyndelw, and other poets.\*

\* See Mr. Davies's mythology of the Druids, in the introduction. The Bard Cyndelw makes his petition to Rhys Prince of South Wales, that he would protect the *Pair Prydain*, or the Bardic cauldron; that is, the institutes of Bardism, the excellencies of which he sets forth. This Bard was refused Christian burial by the clergy of his day, with whom, while living, he was in constant hostility.

The accounts we have in old British fragments, of the rites of initiation into the mysteries of Keridwen, bear a striking analogy in many respects to those of the Eleusinian mysteries. Any one who will compare what Mr. Davies has advanced on the subject, with Bishop Warburton's learned discussions, in his great work, "*The Divine Legation of Moses*," will readily acknowledge the justice of such a conclusion.

These mysteries, according to the same learned prelate, originated in Egypt, from whence they were introduced into Phœnicia, and afterwards into Greece. Our ancestors had intercourse with both Greeks and Phœnicians. It cannot so well be said, they derived them from the Romans, of whom they were jealous in all things: besides that, we have the express testimony of Strabo, that Ceres and Proserpine, as well as Bacchus, were worshipped in Britain, before the Romans were settled here. But a close investigation of the mythology of the various nations of antiquity will present us with that view of the striking resemblance existing between them, that we need not be surprised in finding so near a coincidence between the superstitions of the Britons and nations so remote.

Some extracts from Taliesin will serve to prove the wild enthusiasm of the Britons in respect to heathen rites, so long after the introduction of Christianity. The bards boasted, as much as any of the Greeks, of the great happiness and high honours of the initiated. Their discipline must have been tedious and painful, previous to their being entitled as proper candidates for the privileges they aspired to.

"My lore has been declared in Hebrew. A second time was I formed. I have been a blue salmon; I have been a dog; I have been a stag; I have been a roe-buck on the mountain; I have been a stock of a tree; I have been a spade; I have been an axe in the hand; I have

been a pin in a forceps, for a year and a half; I have been a cock, variegated with white, upon hens, in Eiden; I have been a stallion upon a mare; I have been a buck of a yellow hue, in the act of feeding; I have been a grain of the Arkites, which vegetated on a hill; and then the reaper placed me in a smoky recess, that I might be compelled freely to yield my corn, when subjected to tribulation. I was received by a hen with red fangs, and a divided crest; I remained nine nights an infant in her womb; I have been *Ædd* returning to my former state; I have been an offering before the sovereign. I have died; I have revived; and, conspicuous with my *ivy-branch*, I have been a leader; and by my bounty I am become poor.

“ Again was I instructed by the cherisher with red fangs. Of what she gave me, scarcely can I utter the great praise that is due. I am now *Taliesin*—I will compose a just string, which shall remain to the end of time.”\*

That the same mythological character bore several names among the Britons, it has been before remarked: but the same was the case with the mythology of other nations, and was the effect of the wild confusion of Paganism. It was impossible there should be any consistency throughout such a combination of errors and fooleries, which turned the truth of God into a lie. This was the case, in a particular manner, with respect to their female divinities.

“ The various goddesses of Paganism,” says Mr. Faber, “ seem to be all one and the same mythological character; though they sometimes represent the moon, sometimes the ark, and sometimes the globe of the earth, emerging from the waters of the deluge.”

\* See Davies's Appendix, No. 13, or the *Archæology of Wales*, p. 36.

Mr. Faber has clearly proved that Mercury, Baccus, Hercules, Osiris, Mithras, and Adonis, with many other mythological names, were but appellations of the sun, as well as Apollo, Baal, Bel, Belinus, Moloch, &c.

The moon was worshipped under the name of Diana, Hecate, Venus, Isis, Ceres, Astarte, &c. at least the origin of the rites practised in their worship may be traced to the lunar idolatry.

Noah, who was frequently confounded in early history with one or other of his three sons, was worshipped in conjunction with the sun; while, at other times, he was their Neptune, or god of the sea; and their Pluto, or king of the infernal regions.\* The ark was at one time venerated as his wife, and at other times as his sister or daughter. Juno was the Noetic dove; and at the same time the goddess of the air, and the queen of heaven. The Arkite worship prevailed most in some places, and the solar in others; but both in process of time became blended together. Mr. Faber has, with great ingenuity, and frequently with justice and propriety, referred the greatest part of the fables and legends of the ancients to the history of the deluge, and its concomitant circumstances, or immediate results. The researches lately made into oriental mythology by Sir Wm. Jones, Mr. Maurice, Capt. Wilford, Mr. Moore (in his Hindû pantheon), and other gentlemen, all tend to the illustration of the same grand point, and thereby to render homage to the inspired history of the Bible. It is now become equally evident,

\* The worship of Saturn and his three sons, Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, has been supposed to originate from the history of Noah and his three sons. Idolatry obtained the earliest among the posterity of Ham: hence almost all nations may trace their mythology to Egypt. Japheth was the *Dis* or *Pluto* of the West; and he was identified in Prydain, the son of Ædd, in our mythology.

that the mythology of the British isles abounds with the same lore, and that our Druids were initiated in the same mythology, and practised, with some variations, the same superstitions that prevailed among other nations.

Having pursued our investigations on this subject to a length beyond what was originally proposed, we shall now draw to a close. This we shall do, by leaving with the Reader a few concluding remarks, which offer themselves in a very fair and obvious manner to his consideration.

The mythology of Greece and Rome was confessedly borrowed from other more ancient nations; and by the elegant polish which was superinduced, the strong but rude features of the primitive idolatry were defaced, while the modern system had less meaning, and it became more difficult to account for a variety of rites and practices. The mythology of the ancient Britons has been shewn to bear a strong resemblance to that of the most ancient nations of the world; and it is singular, that the researches recently made into the antiquities of India, should display so many traits of similarity between the Brahmins of that country, and the Druids of our own island. This furnishes us with an additional proof, that the superstitions of our ancestors may be traced to a very remote antiquity; although, some time previous to the Roman invasion, their ancient rites were partly blended with rites comparatively more modern, by the mixture of people that settled among them; and the whole system rendered more complex in theory, and more barbarous in practice. Our historic Triads refer to something of this nature, which is represented as exciting a good deal of commotion among our ancestors.

The Triad referred to is No. 30 of the first series, and No. 101 of the second series, in the *Welsh Archæology*, Vol. II.



It is there stated, that *Coll*, the son of Collfrewi, a noted swineherd, came to a place in Cornwall; and then going to sea, he came to land at a place called Abertarogi, in Monmouthshire; and that all this while *Coll* had fast hold of the bristles of a mystical sow. This implies either his adherence to certain rites, or the ship in which he sailed. It is said, moreover, that he brought with him three grains of wheat, and three bees, to that country. From thence he travelled to *Dyvet*, or Pembroke, where he deposited barley, and a young pig. From thence he went to *Lleyn*, in Caernarvonshire, and deposited rye. The mystical sow then brought forth a wolf's whelp, and an eagle; and this eagle was given to Brynach the Gwydhelian, of the city of Pharaon (the priest of a certain temple); and the wolf he is said to have given to one Menwaed, the lord of *Arllechwedd*. In another place, the same creature brought forth a tiger, which *Coll* threw into the *Menai*; and that became the grand molestation of *Mona* (the island of Anglesea).

As the Druid priests were denominated swineherds, the persons here alluded to were eminent in their day for introducing certain mystical rites, or some foreign worship. The different animals mentioned were sacred emblems; and the *tiger* may denote certain fierce contests occasioned by endeavours made to introduce some new species of worship among the Cambro-Britains. As the mystical sow first came to Cornwall, may not certain rites brought over by the Phœnicians be here alluded to, and the violent opposition made to such innovations be here set forth by the ravages of the tiger in *Mona*, that noted seat of Druidism.

The striking resemblance which appears to have subsisted between the mythology and superstitious rites of different nations may serve to teach us that all men are of common origin, and thereby confirm the Scripture his-



## APPENDIX.

### No. I.

*The worship of Rocks, Rude Stone Monuments, and Obelisks. Reference to remarkable Cromlechs.*

AMONG the ancients, remarkable rocks were not only considered notable as natural curiosities, and prominent features in the description of a country, but were frequently objects of worship. They bowed before the "stone of their fear," as the Caledonian Bard has it; and our Gildas deploras the remains of this superstition in his day, the Britons paying divine honours to hills and mountains (meaning certain rocky promontories) as well as rivers.

Dr. Borlase, in his history of Cornwall, has described some very curious stones considered sacred, particularly a *Tolmen* in the parish of Constantine. This was a large egg-like stone, each end of which was supported by two rocks, so as to leave a passage under the centre of the Tolmen; and the thrusting through that passage was a kind of purification. The tops of these vast stones were frequently excavated, and the water contained in those cavities was deemed peculiarly sacred: but I shall give the Doctor's own description of that singular stone.—  
"It is one vast egg-like stone, placed on the points of two natural rocks, so that a man may creep under the great one, and between its supporters, through a passage about three feet wide, and as much high. The longest diameter of this stone is thirty-three feet from C to D, (referring to the plate he has given of it), pointing due

north and south ; from A to B is fourteen feet six inches deep ; and the breadth in the middle of the surface, where widest, was eighteen feet six inches wide, from east to west. I measured one half of the circumference ; and found it, according to my computation, forty eight feet and a half, so that this stone is ninety seven feet in circumference, about sixty feet across the middle ; and by the best information I can get, contains at least seven hundred and fifty ton of stone. Getting up by a ladder to view the top of it, we found the whole surface worked, like an imperfect or mutilated honey comb, into basons." There are two Tolmens like this in Scilly.

These have been called rocking stones, on account of their being so nicely poised as to move with the motion of the wind ; while, at the same time, it would require an inconceivable force to remove them from their situation.

Such another was that at St. David's, in Pembrokeshire, the object of great veneration even in Christian times.

Certain vast and elevated rocks were considered, in the first ages of the world, as symbols of the sovereign power of the Divinity. Even the true God himself is stiled the Rock of Israel, and the Rock of our salvation. " Their rock," says Moses, " is not like our Rock."

Stone pillars were erected by the postdiluvian Patriarchs, as religious monuments, being considered as memorials and records of peculiar mercies received from the Most High : but, like many other pious usages, this degenerated into superstition ; and was for that reason prohibited to the Israelites, in the law of Moses. Wherever the worship of the Sun prevailed, the tapering obelisk was regarded as his symbol ; and of these we have some still remaining. The worship of Saturn was celebrated among crags and rocks, as the most appropriate situation for exercising the sanguinary rites with which that grim idol was adored.

The places of religious worship among our Britons, as we have noticed before, were enclosed within a circle of stones called by the Bards *Cylch y Cyngrair*, or the circle of federation; because there they ratified their leagues and covenants, by offering sacrificial rites. Of these, they had a great number on a small scale; and some of our parish churches are built on the site of them, and retain the name of *Llan* given to those heathen sanctuaries, meaning the same as the Latin *Fanum*, or *Fane*. The highlanders give the name of *Clachinu* to the present Christian churches: they commonly say, when they are going to Divine service, *Bhel u dol don Chlachan*; that is, we are going to the stones. In the midst of the Druid sanctuary was the altar, or *maen llôg*, (the Logan stone,) the same as is called *Cromlech*, or the inclining Tablet: but the *Cromlech* is, more strictly, the name of the flat stone which is supported by the two pillars, the whole forming the altar of our rude forefathers. All those ancient monuments called *Cromlechs*, it is probable, did not serve for this purpose; for it is not an unpalatable conjecture that, in many instances, the *Cromlech* was the covering stone of a sacred cell of initiation, as several of them appear very unsuitable for altars. Some of them are thought to have been used for sepulchral monuments.

The most remarkable *Cromlechs* are the following:—In the west of Cornwall there are many, of which Dr. Borlase has described the principal ones. “The supporters, of which there are generally three, mark out an area,” says the doctor, “generally six feet long, or somewhat more, and about four feet wide, in the form of a stone chest, or cell: on these supporters rests a very flat or gibbous stone.” The number of the supporters is the same, in those kind of erections, in Denmark, as the Doctor observes from Wormius.

This serves, as one among many instances, to shew the

sacredness of the number three among our ancient sages, as well as those who inhabited other countries.

One, perhaps, as remarkable as any of these ancient monuments, is that famous one in Kent, called *Kitt's Cotty House*, and which, in all probability, is the same as the Maen Ketti mentioned in the Triads, as one of the three greatest works in Britain. There are some curious rocks at *Stanton Drew*, (or *Dryw*,) in Somerset, a place famed at one time for its sacredness among the Druids, as the name imports. Wiltshire, besides containing the remains of the famous temples of Abury and Stonehenge, has many curious monuments, which have been amply illustrated by Sir Richard Hoare.

In the island of Jersey, the Cromlechs are known by the name of *Pouquely*, the same as the Cornish *Pook lêh*, or a collection of stones. Among those in Ireland, there is one near Cloyne, called *Carreg Croith*, or the rock of the Sun.

Sir Richard Hoare esteemed that at *Pentre Evan*, in the parish of Nevern, Pembrokeshire, and called, commonly, *Llech y drybedd*, to be the largest in England or Wales, excepting those at Stonehenge: but Mr. Malkin found that called *Llech y filast*, near Dyffrin house, in the parish of St. Nicholas, Glamorganshire, to be considerably larger. *Llech y filast*, in Cardiganshire, is a large Cromlech; and there is another called *Llech y gawres*. There are others in Carmarthenshire, such as *Burdd Arthur*, and *Gwdl y filast*, and *Llech y flaidast*, &c.

All these are mythological names; for, with respect to the name of *Arthur*, it is given to many of these monuments. *Bwrdd Arthur* is Arthur's table; and in Merionethshire, there is *Coiten Arthur*, or Arthur's Quoit; and even one of the rocky hills near Edinburgh is called *Arthur's*. *Llech y filast*, is the stone of the greyhound bitch; *Llech y gawres*, is the stone of the giantess; and

*Llech y flaidast*, the stone of the she wolf. These last appellations are allusive to the rights of the British Ceres, who was symbolized by the female greyhound : in deference to which, the Welsh mythological tales abound with mention of the *Cŵn annŵn*, or the infernal dogs.

The remains of Druid sanctuaries, or fanes, may be traced, sometimes by remains of their stone circles, and frequently by the names, and the particular situations of places. The name of *Gelli*, in the hilly and mountainous tracts of Monmouthshire and Glamorganshire, occurs very frequently ; and appears to denote the existence of groves devoted to the purposes of superstition. The old mansion house in the parish of Mynydd-ysluyn, is called *Penllwyn y Sarph* ; its name indicates it to have been the residence of one of our Arch-Druids. It is situated on an eminence, skirted with woods, and from thence called *Pen-llwyn*, or the top of the grove ; and as to the addition of the word *Sarph*, or serpent, I have no doubt that it bears a reference to the symbolical serpent worship of our ancestors.

The island of Anglesea abounds with Druid monuments, and the names of places indicative of what they once were. For the curiosities of that island, the Reader, who is acquainted with Mr. Rowland's *Mona antiqua restaurata*, will be convinced that Mona was famed for Druidism, as it is now for its remaining monuments ; while he may not be disposed to think with that ingenious author, that his native island was the principal seat of Druidism in all Britain. The parish of Lanidan, on the shores of the Menai, contains the traces of Druidical monuments. There are *Tre'r Dryw*, or the habitation of the chief Druid ; *Bryn Gwyn*, or the court of justice ; and a Gorsedd, an elevated station from whence the

Druid harangued the people. Near *Trefwry* are vestiges of stone circles: *Bod Drudian*, the abode of the Druids; *Tre'r Beirdd*, or the seat of the Bards; and *Bodowyr*, or the seat of the Ovates. *Bryn Gwydryn* also bears allusion to the same ancient sages.

Some have thought there were no Druids in North Britain: and, from what we may infer from the poems of Ossian, we may be disposed to think that the mythology of the Caledonians approached nearer to that of Scandinavia, than of South Britain. We have no reference to any presiding divinities, nor any mention of sacrifice in the Bard of Selma. Probably, Ossian and his family were of those Bards, who were a class opposed to the Druid Bards; and that there were Bards of that description, we are told in the Welsh traditions; and these were stigmatized by them with the name of *Beirdd Beli*, or the Bards of Beli, the god of battle, the genuine Druids being opposed to warfare. But we have, in a separate essay, given our thoughts on the poems of Ossian.

But, whatever may be thought, respecting the difference or accord subsisting between the Caledonians and the Britons of the south, there are many monuments to be found of that kind which are generally attributed to the Druids. I do not consider the existence of those monuments, as decisive proof that the Druid system of religion and philosophy prevailed over all Britain; for as to the form of their temples, that was not exclusively peculiar to themselves.

Many Cromlechs are to be found in the western isles of Scotland. At Callarish, in the island of Liewes, was to be seen the remains of an old temple, until some Gothic Laird conveyed away the stones, to make lintels for some new houses he was building. Many of the highlanders still pay a superstitious respect to the stone circles, so difficult



is it to eradicate ancient superstitions. Children are frequently observed to be terrified at passing by some of those large erect stones at the approach of night.

There are many places which bear the name of Arthur, not the Arthur of history, but the mythologic Arthur, the representative of the Northern Bear, and referred to as one of the principal divinities of the Britons, as appears from several ancient poems. We have *Cadair Arthur*, one of the high peaks of the Brecknockshire mountains, called the beacons, or Monochdeny hills. There is *Coiten Arthur*, a famous Cromlech in Merionethshire; *Moel Arthur*, in Flintshire; *Carreg Curn March Arthur*, a fragment of some ancient monument; and the name of Arthur is given to a hill near the city of Edinburgh. Most things that were of enormous size appear to have been dignified with the name of Arthur, who was so called most probably on account of his great stature and martial prowess.

The situation in which many of the Druid monuments are found, sufficiently evince that all the worship of those priests was not celebrated in groves. They only performed certain terrific rites in their sacred groves, as was the case with other heathens; and these, we may conceive, were in general dedicated to Diana or the Moon, whom we have shewn to have been one great object of their veneration, particularly in all their incantations. Besides, it was necessary for them to have wood at hand, in order to consume their sacrifices. "No generally received opinion," says Mr. Lanne Buchanan, "is more falsely grounded, than that the Druids retired under groves and secret recesses to worship their divinities." In Scotland in particular, he observes, that the reverse is apparently the fact, as the traces which remain of their temples are situated in the plainest open flat fields, where wood could

not grow for want of soil. In the island of Liewis, the grand temple of Calarnish, and all others around it, are planted on plain deep moss, and each of them inclosed with a circular sunk fence, still visible, cut around them, to keep off cattle from treading on the hallowed ground ; and all this must have been done long after the woods were fallen, as the stone pillars are sunk six feet deep in the moss, and these firmly supported by stones.

The remains of temples are found in several places in the Western Isles, where, owing to the nature of the soil, wood could never grow, being over-run with a shelly sand, which naturally destroys the young sprigs and roots of trees : and Mr. Buchanan says, he never met with a circle either in the middle or even skirt of a wood, but uniformly on plains removed from the copse. It is justly observed by the same writer, that as the Druids had the power of life and death in their hands, they had no need to conceal themselves ; and it was requisite for them to appear in public, to be seen by the people, and to overawe them with their presence ; for they were possessed of unlimited authority, as they united in their persons both the priestly and magisterial functions.

It is therefore highly probable, that the general worship of the Britons under the Druid priests was celebrated in conspicuous situations on open plains, such as at Stonehenge and Calarnish ; or on their sacred mounts, such as *Penbre*, and other *high places*.

The most solemn rites of the Druids, according to Lucan, were performed either at high noon, or at midnight : the first were public, and celebrated in conspicuous places ; but the latter in the consecrated groves, devoted to Diana, or Proserpine, for the purposes of incantation. Music made a great part of their worship ; and all their charms were in verse, of the efficacy of which they had

the strongest persuasion, or at least they wished others to have. But in this they only acted in concert with their brethren of more polished countries. The Mantuan Bard would have us believe in the potency of vocal song :

“ *Carminē vel possunt Cœlo deducere lunam.*”

All sorcerers paid a supreme veneration to the Moon, under the names of Hecate, and Diana ; and were careful, in all important transactions, to regard the age of that planet. The change and full of the moon were regarded as the most auspicious seasons for engaging in any undertaking.

I have before noticed the account given in the Northern Antiquities, of the situation of various ancient monuments in the North of Europe, similar to those found in the British Isles : these are found either on open plains, or on eminences ; and thus situated, they could not have been surrounded by groves. Although the mythology of the Edda differs essentially from that of our Druids, yet it is not improbable that in a remoter age it was not so. But the form of the altar, and the situation of their sanctuaries, does not appear to have differed among the worshippers of either Odin or Heus.

Mr. Wm. Owen, in his sketch of Bardism, affirms, that the worship of the ancient Druids was always held in the most conspicuous places, in the light of the sun, and in the face of day. My friend Mr. Edward Williams, the Bard of Glamorgan, positively avers the same thing, that all the assemblies of the Druid Bards were held not under covert of the night, nor in secluded places, but in open day light. That the reasoning and observation of a Highland author, who appears to have had no acquaintance with the antiquaries I have mentioned, should so exactly coincide with them, is rather an extraordinary

instance. In the prosecution of my researches into the rites of the Druids, I have not ventured to contradict an opinion generally entertained; but it is here proposed to consider the justness of the remarks made by those who differ from the common opinion on this subject.

## No. II.

*Sacred Caverns and Grottos.*

THERE were among the Heathen, certain caverns or grottos consecrated to certain mysterious rites of superstition. The British Isles had many such places, some of them similar to the famous Elephanta of Bombay. The following account I cannot forbear laying before the Reader, both as giving a description of a curious piece of antiquity, as well as tending to illustrate heathen mythology :—

“At New Grange, in the county of Meath, is an immense pyramid of earth, the entrance into which was discovered about the year 1699, by Mr. Campbell. Observing stones under the green sod, he carried many of them away ; and at length arrived at a broad flag, that covered the mouth of the gallery. At the entrance this gallery is three feet wide, and two high : at thirteen feet from the entrance it is but two feet two inches wide. The length of the gallery, from its mouth to the beginning of the dome, is sixty two feet ; from thence to the upper part of the dome is eleven feet six inches ; the whole length seventy one feet and a half. The dome, or cave, with the long gallery, gives the exact figure of a cross : the length between the arms of this cross is twenty feet. The dome forms an octagon, twenty feet high, with an area of about seventeen. It is composed of long flat stones, the upper projecting a little below the lower, and closed in and capped with a flat flag. In each arm of the cross there are two oval rock basons.”—Such is the account of the Cave of the Sun at New Grange, extracted by Mr. Faber from Ledwich’s *Antiquities of Ireland*. The pyramid of earth agrees with similar erections of this kind in honour of the Sun. Various obeliaks of rude stone, still to be seen in

many places, were raised in honour of the great Luminary, or as symbols of fire.

It is further observed, that in the covering stone of the eastern arm of this cruciform grotto, is an inscription, written in symbolical characters; which, according to Mr. Beaufort, signifies *the house of God*. He adds, that "all the ancient altars found in Ireland, and now distinguished by the name of *Cromleachs*, or *sloping-stones*, were originally called *Bothal*, or *the house of God*; and they seem to be of the same species as those mentioned in the book of Genesis, called by the Hebrews *Bethel*, which has the same signification as the Irish *Bothal*. The tabernacles in the mount of New Grange, it is observed, have an exact conformity to the *Cromleachs*, found in different parts of the kingdom. Jacob, we know, erected a pillar to the honour of the true God, and called the place *Bethel*; and from thence the Heathen corrupted that pious custom of the patriarchs to the purposes of superstition."—See *Faber*, Vol. I. p. 110.

With regard to the cross-like form of this cave, Mr. Faber remarks, that the cross was a grand symbol throughout the Pagan world, long previous to its becoming, for a very different reason, an object of veneration to Christians. Thus the symbol of Tautus, or Noah, was the letter T.; and thus Isis, or the Ark, was frequently represented with a cross in her hand.\* The cruciform cavern of New Grange, in short, with its octagonal dome, is an exact subterraneous model of the supernal pagoda of Benares, which was constructed in the shape of a vast cross, with a high cupola in the centre of the building, pyramidal towards the summit.

A little further on, our learned author remarks, that "the names of the English letter *tc*, the Greek *tau*, and

\* In Egypt the cross was the sign or signification of eternal life.

the Hebrew *thau* and *teth*, are all equally derived from the title of the god Taut, Thoth, Teut, Tet, or Taaustus; who, as I have already observed, was like Osiris and Mahadeva, the same as Noah."—*Faber*, Vol. II. pp. 388—392.

Although Taaustus, or Thoth, be allowed to be the same as Mercury, and perhaps the Eastern Buddha; yet we may not be disposed to grant that *Taut*, or *Tat*, was the same as *Titan*, which was used only as a different name for Phœbus, or the sun, among the Greeks and Romans. In the Druid mythology of Britain, *Tydain* was a name for the divinity who represented the sun; and, like Apollo, is spoken of as the father of poetic inspiration.

When we consider the partiality of our Druids for caverns and grottos, the extract which I have given will afford us some additional help to explain their superstitions. The last observation of Mr. Faber should be read with the recollection of what Cæsar says of the Druids of Gaul, that Mercury was the principal divinity whom they worshipped; and Tacitus says the same respecting the Germans.

The symbol of their supreme divinity was a large oak, with all its side branches cut off; and then they joined two of them to the highest part of the trunk, so that they extended themselves on either side like the arms of a man, making in the whole the shape of a cross, (or the letter T): accordingly, Lucan speaks of their *mæsta simulachra deorum*, of the hideous symbols of their gods; which he describes as enormous and rude trunks of timber, with their branches cut:—

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*Arte carent,  
Cæcisq; extant immania truncis.*

Mr. Faber conceives, that the famous St. Patrick's purgatory in Ireland was also a Mithratic grotto. This is a small artificial cavern, built upon a little island, denominated *Macra* in Lough Derg, in Donegal : this spot was the seat of great superstition in the church of Rome.—“The whole fable respecting it,” says Mr. Faber, “was a mere adaptation of the ancient orgies to the Christianity of the church of Rome.”

Austin, the apostle of the Anglo-Saxons, was advised by Pope Gregory not to destroy the Heathen temples, but to convert them into Christian churches ; and, in other instances, to accommodate Christianity to the prejudices of the Heathen. There is reason to believe that this was too much the case among the Britons, long before Austin's arrival in this island : of this we have an instance in a place of peculiar sanctity in Wales, called *Brefi*, no doubt from some circumstance which befel the sacred oxen : this was afterwards dedicated to St. David, or Dewi, and became the seat of a national synod. But because some heathenish legends were mingled with the history of some eminent men in the ancient church, it seems no very fair deduction entirely to deny their existence. This, Mr. Faber has attempted to do with respect to Patrick, Bridget, and Columba ; as others in civil history have done with respect to Arthur and Ambrosius. Real personages have, in various countries, borne mythological names ; and their histories have been interwoven with much superstition : but we must, as well as our means of information will permit us, manifest our discernment by separating the truth of history from the fictitious tales of credulity.

The vast cavern at Castleton, in the Peak of Derbyshire, is regarded by Mr. Faber as peculiarly formed by nature, without the help of art, to serve for a grand Mithratic temple, and the celebration of the Cabiric mys-



teries. The narrow passage into this stupendous place represented to the imagination of a Heathen, the door of the ark through which none but the pure and holy family of Noah were allowed to pass: consequently, the commemorative passing through those rocky orifices symbolized the arkite birth of that family; or, in other words, the regeneration of the mysteries.

“ With regard to the interior of the Derbyshire cavern, I am persuaded that any person who descends into it, after having first attentively perused the sixth book of the *Æneid* of Virgil, will be not a little surprised at its singular resemblance to the Hades of the mysteries, though the terrific machinery once introduced into it exists no longer. You first enter into an immense and magnificent natural cave, the whole of which, however, is perfectly visible by the dusky light admitted through its noble arched gateway. From this cave you are conducted to a small narrow door; having passed through which you rapidly descend, till you find yourself upon the brink of a subterraneous river. Over the river you are ferried in a small boat; and, after reaching the opposite side, you continue your course along its banks through an alternate succession of narrow passages and lofty caverns: at length you arrive at a beautiful arched grotto, of very large dimensions, in the centre of which rises a natural rock, which you are surprised to find illuminated ready for your reception. The rock itself is occupied by a number of persons, who had previously entered for that purpose; and your ears are forthwith saluted by a variety of wild songs, which forcibly remind you of the old popular superstition respecting elves and fairies. I have little doubt but that this is done pursuant to an immemorial custom; all traditions respecting the origin and import of which have, however long, been obliterated from the minds of the guides.”

“During the celebration of the Cabiric mysteries in this stupendous natural temple, the aspirant, after passing through the narrow door of the rock, after ferrying through the infernal stream, emblematical of the central waters of the vast abyss, and after encountering the canine portents which grinned horribly upon him as he wandered through the contracted windings of the cave, at length reached the illuminated grotto, the Elysium of the orgies.”\*—P. 422.

\* The Phœnicians made the image of the sun of one black stone, round at the bottom, its top ending either in the shape of a cone, or a wedge. Their neighbours, the Syrians, had the same custom; and worshipped a rude image of the sun. The oldest idol of the Arabs was worshipped under the form of a great unhewn stone.—BORLASE, Book iii. ch. 3.

## No. III.

*Thoughts on Language.*

THE variation of language and expression among mankind, has always been deemed one of the most curious subjects of investigation. For some time after the flood, the sacred history informs us, that all people were of one language, and of one speech. But, in order to facilitate the peopling of the world, God confounded their language. The dispersion of mankind, considered in itself, would unavoidably tend to produce in time a great variety of dialects; but these would not become distinct languages, differing as to terms, idioms, inflections, and pronunciation, until some great changes had taken place in the moral condition, the pursuits, and habits of the people. Changes in language keep pace with other changes and revolutions, especially in the rude ages of the world. The Almighty God endued man with speech, on the same principle as he conferred other capacities upon the rational creature; that is, subject to variation for the better or the worse, according to his exertions, and the use he might make of his mental or corporeal powers. Hence among "all the speeches of the babbling earth," and even in the dialectical variations of the same people, we may perceive something that accords with the genius, character, and pursuits, of that people. This must appear very striking to those who have travelled among different nations.

That the climate and atmosphere have no small influence on the language, and in particular on the pronunciation of a people, by affecting the bodily organs, there can be no cause to doubt.—The effects of a civilized or

uncivilized state, the difference caused by illness and weakness, by temper and association, have a powerful operation on those habits of body and mind on which the clearness, force, strength, and promptitude, of language depend. In some countries, and in some families, we see considerable variation as to these particulars. Every thing tends to shew that language is the gift of God, and essential to our rational existence; but that this faculty may be improved or deteriorated almost indefinitely.

There are certain languages which may be classified together; and there is hardly any language but that others may be pointed out, with which it has, if not a close, yet some distant affinity. A sameness of language produces intercourse; and a difference of language, even in a people who have long lived under the same government and laws, and profess the same religion, tends to disunion: but no good can proceed from attempts to compel a people to renounce their ancient language at the will of their conquerors. The Romans acted in this with consummate policy; that people attracted the provincials to learn the language of their masters, without using coercive measures, in order to oblige them to relinquish their own.

Among the languages of Europe, none are more ancient than those of the Celtic stock; and the reader who wishes to see a masterly dissertation on this subject, may consult an essay in the first volume of the *Cambrian Register*. Mr. Edward Lhuyd has drawn up a comparative etymology, in which he accounts for the various forms under which the same radical words appear in different languages. "The origin of dialects, which," as he observes, "in time become distinct languages, happens,

"I. From the alteration of the use of words, by applying them to signify different notions from those already received.

" II. From an accidental transposition of letters or syllables.

" III. From an addition or subtraction of them, which is sometimes casual, and sometimes industrious, for improvement.

" IV. From using different prepositions in compounds, or different terminations.

" V. From a change of letters on account of mispronunciation.

" VI. From the use of foreign words, either introduced by conquest, or borrowed from those nations with whom we have trade and commerce."

The similarity of radical words, or of any expressions in common use among civilized nations, is not the strongest feature of affinity which one language may bear to another : grammatical inflexion, and the idioms of expression, are marks of closer affinity. But it argues that those languages are of a kindred stock, in which there are so many primitives, not only alike in sound, but expressive of the same ideas. In these affinities, consonants are chiefly to be regarded ; but the interchanges which these are subject to in some languages should be particularly noticed. The same word may be recognized in two or three languages, under an orthography so varied, and with a change of certain letters, that at first sight it scarcely appears to be radically the same. The pronouns and numerals may be specified in particular.

Those languages now considered the most perfect and copious, such as the Arabic and the Sanscreeet in the East, as well as the Greek and Latin, in Europe, with the English, German, and Italian, must have existed at one time in a very simple state. Many languages, by the help of compounds and auxiliaries, may be made rich and copious, although consisting of no great number of primitives ; for even several words, which we are apt to

regard as radical, will, upon inspection, be found to be derivatives. This will apply to the Greek, with all its boasted copiousness; and I should conceive even to the Arabic and Sanscreeet.—To the Hebrew it certainly applies; and Mr. Owen has taught us, in his interesting Welsh and English Dictionary, that although he has collected above one hundred thousand words, yet a great part of these are compounds branched out in a variety seldom used. Thus the word *Cymdaith*, a companion or associate, has no less than eighteen derivations, while that word itself is compounded of two words.

As to the affinity that has existed, in ancient times, between languages that are become totally distinct; scholars need not be reminded of the state of the Italian, French, Portuguese, and Spanish, compared with the Latin: or the English, German, Danish, and Swedish. The same affinity exists between the languages of the Celtic stock, the Irish, the Gaelic, the Welsh, the Cornish, and the Armoric. But as to the subject of the variety and yet the affinity of languages, especially those of Europe, I cannot do better than present the reader with what Mr. Owen has advanced, in his essay on the primitive population of Europe, and especially this island.

“The human voice,” says that ingenious Antiquary, “is capable of uttering nearly three hundred simple sounds; that is, such as are perfectly vocal, or such as are articulate, consisting of a vowel and a consonant. All other sounds are only derivative, or combinations of these. It would be a natural and important discovery, could the fact be established, that every one of those primary sounds should have an appropriate simple idea annexed to it, and that the sounds and ideas should mutually enter into every combination, which might take place, in forming longer words.

“But there are persons, (*alluding to the infidel hypothesis, which denies language to be the gift of God,*) who suppose that language was acquired progressively; and,

consequently, that every sound had a certain import affixed by chance. Notwithstanding what may be so suggested, it will not be difficult to demonstrate the first formation of speech to have been strictly so; that all the sounds were classed according to the different sorts of ideas with which the mind would be necessarily impressed. Some may urge that such a regularity of construction could not have taken place, except men were conscious to each other's ideas, which could not have been before the medium for that end was formed. However surprising and unaccountable the fact may be deemed; we find that the structure is not only thus perfect, but that it is much more so; for as the primary or simple ideas of the mind would properly divide themselves into a variety of classes, according to their analogy; so it is observable, that all the simple sounds are appropriate to those ideas, arranged and preserving the like analogy in sound, as the others do in sense. Shall we suppose, that primary speech consisted merely of simple sound, or that the combination of those sounds was coeval with it? The former seemingly was the fact; as some languages tend to prove. [Here, in a note, the Welsh in particular is instanced; and from what little we know of it, the *Chinese*," adds our author, "seems partly of that form to this day.] However from the necessary connexion between some sounds, and their relative ideas, man was not long before he compounded them.

" The effects of composition were words of two sounds, such as *man*, *bar*, *anu*, *canu*, and the like. All words of three letters, with a vowel in the middle, have invariably suffered an illusion of another preceding it, the one remaining being that part of the sound upon which the principal idea depends.\*

\* Lord Monboddo proves the point here brought forward to be true with regard to the Greek; and thereby his Lordship, as a scholar,

“ Every particle of the original language must have been pregnant with thought; for not a sound could be uttered, but it had, whether alone or compounded with others, some meaning. This may be easily proved; for in the *Welsh* this is so far observable, that these primary elements have been preserved, with the exception, perhaps, of three or four score. Those affixes, which form the inflexions of verbs, are real words, significant in themselves of the time or action they are intended to imply; they were so used separately, or otherwise, and are so still in the last mentioned language.”

For the illustration of this proposition, the Author of the essay observes in a note, “ that all those inflexions which denote action, or motion, are derived from *Au*, to move, to go; and infinitively, *that is going, causing to move*. The Rev. Dr. Vincent, by dint of acuteness of judgment and learning, has discovered that it is nearly so in *Greek verbs*, and makes *ew (eo)* the root. A knowledge of the *Welsh* would have shewn him a more regular deduction, and enabled him to bring the system to greater perfection.

“ If the appropriate ideas,” our author proceeds, “ could be restored to the few elementary sounds, which are now no longer retained in that tongue, it is presumed, that the positions here laid down would be established, and the original language, perhaps not only of *Europe*, but of the world, completely restored.

“ All the languages of *Europe* evidently discover one common original; they are, therefore, formed upon those simple sounds with their connected abstracted ideas. What constitutes that diversity which we find, is owing to the appropriation of them to a variety of objects, to either of which the general idea would easily apply.

has helped us to confute his infidel theory, respecting the origin of man and of language.



Thus such a word as *fodd* might imply a *road* in one dialect, and a *ford*, or *course*, in another ; or *rhyd*, a *ford*, should again mean a *road*, as the fact actually is. However contrary to this, in a vast number, the same appropriation runs through languages in general. Thus the Welsh word for *Heaven* is found in no less than thirty different dialects, as may be seen by consulting Chamberlayne's collection of the Lord's prayer. We might also select fifty principal words in the Welsh, which run through about as many languages.

"Possibly, the confusion of languages among those concerned in the tumultuary insurrection of *Babel*, was the effect of merely altering the appropriation to particulars, which still belonged to the same general idea ; for the consequence of it appears more evident in that respect, perhaps, than in any other that can be suggested. And this would be fully adequate to the design ; and, at the same time, without any real change taking place in the abstract signification of a single word."

As to the common remark respecting the instability of language, it is observed that, "although the language of the *Saxons*, on their coming to Britain, has been the oftenest exposed to a total change ; yet, after all, it has preserved its original *Teutonic* stamina."

"The most general cause then of the variety of dialects, is that change of appropriation. However, there is another more early in its origin than that, which is the diversity in the combination of primitive sounds, or the compounding of words, by people detached from one another ; but all had the same stock of primary words, joined to the same abstract ideas."

It is farther supposed, that all words of the primitive tongue, in their first state of combination, were resolvable into classes, where each word, in every particular class, preserved the analogy, or general idea, of the whole.

The nature of that analogy is specified, in a class of words taken from the Welsh :—

*Rhên*, Supreme Being: *Pen*, head; chief,

*Llen*, veil, or what is over. *Nen*, vault or canopy; the sky. *Cen* (*Ken*), the foremost.

*Hen*, what is advanced; elder, old,

*Sen*, what makes conspicuous, a stigma, a name.

*Gen*, intellect or soul; the organ of utterance, the mouth as in *Genau*.

*Fen*, a flowing principle; air.

The word *Bal* is then instanced as entering into the composition of words in various languages, and in particular the WELSH, the IRISH, the ARMORIC, the HEBREW, the GREEK, the SAXO-GOTHIC, the LATIN, the GERMAN, the SWEDISH, the ITALIAN, the ENGLISH, the SPANISH, FRENCH, and RUSSIAN.

After proving that our *Cymry*, or original Britons, are a branch of that vast family of the name of Cimbri, who under different appellations, and especially that of *Galli* and *Celtæ*, took possession of the west of Europe; after this Mr. Owen states, that his positions may be still elucidated, from a comparative view of the languages of Europe. He observes, “that no stronger elucidation can be brought, with respect to either of these points, than that nations, separated for the greater moiety of the age of the world, should respectively preserve the same language, through all the vicissitudes of time.” We have then given us, “a classification of the various dialects of the great European family, under their respective parental tongues, according to the identity of their grammar, structure and nomenclature.”

#### I. THE CYMBRIAN.

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Slavonic.      | 6. Dalmatian.  |
| 2. Polish.        | 7. Croatic.    |
| 3. Muscovite.     | 8. Bulgarian.  |
| 4. Nova-Zemblian. | 9. Servian.    |
| 5. Bohemian.      | 10. Carniolan. |

- |                |                         |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| 11. Vandalic.  | 15. Mankish.            |
| 12. Wendish.   | 16. Cornish.            |
| 13. Waldensic. | 17. Armoric, or Breton. |
| 14. Irish.     | 18. Welsh.              |

## II. THE GOTHIC.

- |              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. Runic.    | 7. Norwegian.   |
| 2. Teutonic. | 8. Islandic.    |
| 3. German.   | 9. Anglo-Saxon. |
| 4. Dutch.    | 10. Orcadian.   |
| 5. Swedish.  | 11. English.    |
| 6. Danish.   |                 |

## III. THE FINNIC.

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Laponese.   | 6. Pomeranian. |
| 2. Livonian.   | 7. Werulian.   |
| 3. Courlandic. | 8. Prussian.   |
| 4. Esthonian.  | 9. Hungarian.  |
| 5. Lithuanian. |                |

## IV. THE MIXED.

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Greek.         | 6. French.     |
| 2. Greek, Modern. | 7. Portuguese. |
| 3. Latin.         | 8. Walachian.  |
| 4. Italian.       | 9. Walloon.    |
| 5. Spanish.       |                |

## V. THE IBERIAN.

1. The Cantabric.

We shall here subjoin the further remarks of this ingenious writer on the different dialects of the Cimbric or Celtic languages.

1. Between some of the dialects there exists a certain characteristic analogy, creating an uniform difference from some others.

2. The *Welsh*, *Cornish*, and *Breton*, have an uniform agreement with one another, in grammar, structure, and nomenclature.

3. The various dialects of the *Sclavonian* have the same agreement with each other.

4. The *Waldensic*, *Irish*, *Erse*, and *Mankish*, have also their peculiar uniformity of character.

5. The *Welsh* and *Sclavonic* have more of a common characteristic semblance with each other than with the *Irish*, and those classed with it.

6. Of the *Welsh*, *Cornish*, and *Breton*, the two latter are most alike.

7. Of all the dialectical variations of the *Welsh*, those that occur in the southern parts of Wales agree most with the *Cornish*.

8. The *Cornish* approaches nearer than either of those classed with it to the *Irish*.

9. The *Irish* has the greatest affinity of structure with the *Latin* of any.

10. The *Breton* has more words in common with the *Saxon*, than the *Welsh* has.

11. The language of the ancient *Belgæ*, of *Gaul* and *Britain*, had more than the *Welsh* of the *Irish* structure.

## No. IV.

Mr. Edward Lhuyd, in the Welsh Preface to his *Archæologia Britannica*, has advanced some very ingenious conjectures respecting the first peopling of this island. Having, in p. 37, and 75, of *HORÆ BRITANNICÆ*, mentioned the name of that celebrated Antiquary and Linguist, I think it just to lay before the reader Mr. Lhuyd's own words translated into English.

After offering some sound arguments to prove, that the old Britons were acquainted with letters, long before the coming over of Augustine and his associates, and that the Saxons derived their characters from the old Britons and Irish; he apologises for using an orthography, differing from that used in Welsh books, on the ground of accommodating his plan, so as to comprise all the dialects of the *Celtic*, for the gratification of literary gentlemen of various countries, who might have the curiosity of comparing with other languages the *Irish*, *Cornish*, and *Armoric*, as well as the *Welsh*. That ingenious author then proceeds to state, that the inhabitants of *Cornwall* and *Armoric-Britain*, (or *Britany*,) are genuine ancient Britons, as well as the natives of *Wales*. "But you will doubtless be at a loss for that infinite number of exotic words, which (besides the British) you will find in the ancient tongues of *Ireland* and *Scotland*. There are for this, as seems to me, two reasons; I say, *as seems*, because we have no authority of histories or other means, that may lead us into the truth, but only the comparison of languages. In the first place I suppose, that the ancient colonies of Ireland were composed of two distinct nations, though co-occupiers of the same country; I mean, the *Gwydhels*

and the *Scots*: that the *Gwydhels* were the old (or primary) inhabitants of this island, and that the *Scots* came out of Spain. So far, therefore, as their language agrees either with us or the other Britons, the words are *Gwydhelian* (or old Irish), and for the rest they must also be either *Gwydhelian*, or else ancient *Scottish*. The second reason for their having so many foreign words, is this: that the *Welsh*, *Cornish*, and *Armoric* Britons, have lost some part of their old language, by their living for the space of almost five hundred years, viz. from the time of Julius Cæsar to Valentinian III., under the government of the Romans. And thus, it is possible, that a great many of those words which appear to us exotic may be old British, though we do not recognize them, according to examples which I have instanced in page 7 of the *Archaiology*. Nor was it only in North Britain, that these *Gwydhelians* have in the most ancient times inhabited, but also *England* and *Wales*;—whether before our time, or contemporary with us, or both, is what cannot be determined. But to me it seems most probable, that they were here before our coming into the island; that our ancestors did from time to time force them northward; and that from the *Cantyre* or Foreland of Scotland, and the country of Galloway, and the Isle of Man, they passed over into Ireland. And their coming into this island, was from no other country than Gaul, that is, from France and Flanders.

“Having now related what none have hitherto made mention of, viz.—*First*, That the old inhabitants of Ireland consisted of two nations, *Gwydhelians* and *Scots*. *Secondly*, That the *Gwydhelians* descended from the most ancient *Britons*, and the *Scots* from *Spain*. *Thirdly*, That the *Gwydhelians* lived in the most ancient times; not only in North Britain (where they still continue intermingled with *Scots*, *Saxons*, and *Danes*), but also in England and

Wales. And, *Fourthly*, That these *Gwydhelians* of England and Wales were inhabitants of Gaul before they came into this island. Having been so bold as to write such novelties, and yet at the same time to acknowledge that I have no written authority, I am obliged to produce what reasons I have, and that, as the extent of this letter requires, in as few words as may be.

“ I have already proved at large, in the first and second section of this book, that our language agrees with a great part of theirs : and in the Irish grammar you will also find, that the genius or nature of their language, in their changing the initial letters, &c. is also agreeable to that of the Welsh. And as, by collating the languages, I have found one part of the Irish accord with the Welsh ; so by a diligent perusal of the *New Testament*, and some manuscript papers I received from the learned Dr. Edward Brown, written in the Cantabrian language, I have had a satisfactory knowledge as to the affinity of the other parts with the old *Spanish* (or Celto-Iberian) : for though a great deal of that language be retained in the present, yet we find it much better preserved among the Cantabrians. Now my reason for calling the *British Irish*, GWYDHELIANS, and those of *Spain*, Scots, is, because the old British manuscripts call the *Picts* GWYDHEL FICHTI, or GWYDHELIAN PICTS ; and the *Picts* were undoubtedly *Britons*, as appears, not only by the name of them in Latin and in Irish, but by the names of the mountains and rivers in the Lowlands of Scotland, where they inhabited : and there probably their descendants are yet (though their language be lost) intermixed with Scots, Strath-Clyde Britons, old Saxons, Danes, and Normans. As for giving the Irish who came from Spain the name of *Scots*, there is good authority for it, the Irish authors having constantly called the Spanish colony *Kin Skuit*, or the *Scottish* nation. No more, therefore, need be said

to prove the *Gwydhelians* ancient *Britons*. And as to the *Scots*, it is only necessary we should produce examples of the affinity of the old *Spanisk* with the present *Irish*."

Mr. Lluyd then gives some specimens of the affinity existing between the Cantabrian and the Irish. These specimens consist of more than a hundred words, with respect to which he further says, that more might be added, not only out of the Cantabrian, but also out of the modern Spanish, notwithstanding the alterations made in that language, by the addition of so many Latin and Arabic phrases. "Seeing then," Mr. Lluyd proceeds, "it is somewhat manifest, that the ancient inhabitants of Ireland consisted of two nations; that the *Gwydhelians* were Britons; and that *Ninius* and others wrote an unquestionable truth, when they asserted, that the Scottish nation came out of Spain;—the next thing I have to make out is, that that part of them called *Gwydhelians*, have once dwelt in *England* and *Wales*. There are none of the Irish themselves, that I know of, amongst all the writings they have published about the history and origin of their nation, that maintain they were ever possessed of *England* and *Wales*. And yet whoever takes notice of a great many names of the rivers and mountains throughout the kingdom, will find no reason to doubt, that the Irish must have been the inhabitants, when those names were imposed on them. There was no name anciently more common on rivers than *Uysk*, which the Romans wrote *Isca* and *Oscæ*; and is yet, as I have elsewhere observed, retained in the English, in the several names of *Ask*, *Esk*, *Usk*, and *Ox*, *Ax*, *Ex*, &c. Now, although there be a considerable river of that name, it is not understood, either in our language, or in the Cornish. Neither is it less vain labour to look for it in the *British* of *Wales*, *Cornwall*, or *Bretany*, than it would be to search for *Avon*, which is the name of some rivers of *England*, in



the English language. The signification of the word *Uysk*, in Irish, is *water*. And as the words *Coom*, *Dore*, *Stour*, *Tame*, *Dove*, *Avon*, &c. in England, evince themselves to be no other than the Welsh *Cwm*, *Dwr*, *Stour*, *Tame*, *Dovi*, *Avon*, and thereby shew the Cymbri, or Welsh, to be their old inhabitants : so do the words *Uysk*, (or *Wysg*), *Loch*, *Kemuy*, *Ban*, *Drim*, *Llech*, and several others, make it manifest, that the Irish, (as the people with whom these words are current), were anciently possessed of those situations, inasmuch as, in their language, the signification of the words are, *Water*, *Lake*, *a great River*, *a mountain*, *a Back*, or *Ridge*, *a Gray Stone*. As for the word *Uisg*, it is so well known, that they use no other word at all for water. And I have formerly shewn, that as there are so many rivers of that name throughout England, the word might have been anciently in our language. But having looked for it in vain in the old *Loegrian British*, still retained in Cornwall, and in Britany ; and reflecting that it was impossible, if it had once been in the British, that both they and we should lose a word of so common use, and of so necessary a signification ; I could find no reason to doubt, that the *Gwydhelians* have formerly lived all over the kingdom, and that our ancestors had forced the greatest part of them to retire to the North, and to Ireland, in the very same manner as the Romans afterwards subdued us, and as the barbarians of Germany and Denmark, upon the downfall of the Roman empire, have driven us, one age after another, to our present limits. We see then how necessary the Irish language is, to those who undertake to treat of our antiquities ; and by reading the first section of this book (the *Archæologia Britannica*) it will appear evident, that it is impossible to be a complete master of the ancient British, without a competent knowledge of the Irish, besides the Cornish and the Armorican. This he

instances in the Welsh word *Corlan*, a sheepfold, which comes from *Caor*, a sheep, in Irish; and in the phrase *Gwartheg blithion*, milch cows, from the Irish *Blathwin*, to milk: and so he observes in many other words. As to the point respecting the *Gallic* origin of the Gwydhelians, or old Britons, who went over to Ireland, this he regards as evident from a comparison of the languages of the Gauls and the Irish, of which he adduces several instances.

Some of the proper names and compounds appear the most in point, such as *VERCINGETORIX*, a general of the *Averni*, in *Cæsar*. *Fear cean go tûrús* signifies verbatim the head man of the expedition.

*VERGASILLAUNUS*, another commander of the *Averni*; *Fear go saelan*, the standard bearer. Another signification is, the King's armour-bearer.

*VERGOBRETUS*, saith *Cæsar*, signified a chief magistrate in the language of the *Ædui*. *Liscus qui summo magistratui præerat quem VERGOBRETUM vocant Ædui, qui creatur annuus et vitæ necisque in suos potestatem habet.* *Cæsar de Bello Gallico*, Lib. i. Now *Fear go breath*, signifies a judge: verbatim, the man that judges. And it was by noticing this word that our antiquary, as he says, first suspected the Gwydhelians to be ancient Gauls.

Here Mr. Lhuyd starts another curious proposal: "Seeing then we find by the ancient language of the *Celtæ*, and by a great number of the old *Gwydhelian* words that are still extant in the present French, that the Gwydhelians came originally out of France; some will be surprised how it is that we find so many *Teutonic* words in the Irish. But the reason arises from hence, that those people of the old Gauls called *Belgæ*, spoke the *Teutonic* as they do yet; and besides the Gauls that came over here, and afterwards passed into Ireland, some of the *Belgæ* came also; and those (as seems likewise

probable, to the learned antiquary Mr. *Roderick O'Flaherty*), were the very men they call *Fir-Bolg*, who came, according to their tradition, into Ireland, long before the *Scots*." He then proceeds to enumerate such words in more than a hundred instances.

Mr. L. also finds many words that accord with the Welsh and Irish, in the ancient dialect of Gascony, a country from whence some of our insular Britons, according to the *Triads*, are sprung. It is also observable, that this people end their infinitive mood in *a*, which is the case in the Cornish. Some of their proper names are also in affinity with the Welsh: ex. gr. *Mouric*, *Cenon*, *Talayran*, *Goyrans*, and *Goudelyn*; these are the same as our *Meyric*, or *Mouric*, as in some old manuscripts; *Conan*, *Talhaiarn*, *Gerens*, Corn. *Gereint*, W. *Kyndelow*, *Goudhelyn*.

There are some interesting letters of Mr. Lhuyd in the *Cambrian Register*, Vol. I.; and, especially, one to Mr. Babington, dated Oxford, October 1703, in which are expressed the same thoughts respecting the Aborigines of England and Ireland, as he gives in his Preface to *Arch. Br.*

There is something plausible in the hypothesis, of the prior occupation of Britain by the original inhabitants of Ireland; and that the Gwydhelian, or old Irish, was spoken in this island, previous to the occupation of it by the ancestors of any of its present possessors. Mr. Whitaker, and others, following the dictates of a sound judgment, concluded that Ireland must have received its first inhabitants from this island.


## No. V.

*The Origin of Letters.*

PROFESSOR Kidd has, with great learning and ingenuity, investigated this curious topic; and, after shewing the impossibility of inventing an alphabet, he states the opinion of the ancient historians and philosophers, who all ascribe the knowledge of letters to a divine origin. "Even in Egypt, which may be called with much propriety the cradle of the arts, sciences, philosophy, priest-craft, and almost every species of human knowledge, no claim was ever laid to the invention of letters. The magicians, the wise men, the soothsayers, the astrologers, and the priesthood, of that nation agree, that letters came to them from their supreme divinity." The Brahmins of India, in particular, ascribed letters to a divine original; and so did our western Brahmins, the Druids: for in one of the *Triads* mention is made of a certain mythological character, who inscribed upon stones, or pillars, the arts and sciences of the world.

I shall here give, in the Professor's own words, his reasons for believing that, *The Alphabet was the gift of God to Adam.*

"First, As no man ever pretended to the invention of an alphabet, and as no nation ever laid claim to it; as all the ancient alphabets can be traced up to one; it is evident, that this one must have been known all at once. And as our theory leads us to conclude that this one was the immediate gift of God to man, there never was any of the human race on whom the Divine Being was more likely to bestow this gift, than the first of men. From every view which the Scripture gives us of the creation



of man, we have every reason to infer and conclude, that Adam was created in full perfection, both of body and mind. And, if so, he must have been created in full stature, and in the perfect exercise of every power and faculty, both of body and mind: and we have every reason to believe, that he had immediate communion and intercourse with his Creator. The Scriptures most positively affirm, that his Creator addressed him by the medium of speech, Gen. i. 28. ‘And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.’ And after the Divine Being had prepared the garden of Eden, and brought the man into it, we read again, that God addressed Adam by the medium of speech, Gen. ii. 16, 17. ‘And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.’ Nothing can be plainer, than that the Divine Being addressed Adam by the medium of speech, and in the use of language. But to what purpose would this have been, if Adam had not been able to speak himself, nor yet to have understood the language in which he was addressed by his Creator? Therefore, it is clearly evident, that the Divine Being held intercourse with Adam, by the medium of language, at his creation, and before his fall. Nothing is more plain, than that Eve was created in the full exercise of speech, and the knowledge of language. The interesting and affecting account of the fall, recorded in the third chapter of the book of Genesis, in the dialogue between the tempter and the woman, undeniably proves this.”

As the Professor does not acquiesce in the common

opinion, that the tempter was the natural serpent, or any other brute creature, he has given us a very plausible comment on the history of the fall, and which does away the absurd notion that the serpent was endued with speech, the grand organ of rational address. After proving that the word, which we translate *serpent*, is the appropriate name of the tempter, and means nothing else than the fallen spirit, assuming the form of an angel of light: the learned Author establishes his position, that speech is to be regarded as one of the powers and faculties bestowed upon the rational moral being, whether human or angelic, in its original formation. Without this gift, he argues, man could not have held intercourse either with God, or angelic beings; he could not have been a social creature.

“ Now if it be true, that the human soul must think, as well as speak, by the medium of language, it undeniably follows, that language must have been the gift of God to Adam; and that gift which dignified him above all other parts of the lower creation, and the most perfecting of all the gifts bestowed upon his soul, except that of righteousness and true holiness. It was that gift which exercised and improved all the other powers and faculties of his soul; and it could not have been exercised by him at first, without the knowledge of language; and the knowledge of language he could not have had, without the knowledge of letters.”

To one in the situation of the first man, it appears to our learned Author, that the gift of speech was essentially connected with the knowledge of letters; and *that* knowledge was of the greatest use to him, both before and after his fall.

Here then we have three things proposed to us, in the Professor's hypothesis:—That man was originally endued with speech, as the gift of God, to perfect his rational and

social powers; that the knowledge of written characters was coeval with the gift of speech, and that the former could not exist without the latter; that the first writing was alphabetical, and consequently that this was prior to any other mode of expressing ideas in writing.

Names, qualities, and actions; or, as grammarians speak, nouns, adjectives, and verbs; made up the primitive language of man: the other parts of speech were added in process of time. God gave man what was requisite to his primitive state; and, in the use of his reason, he was capable of improving his stock of words, and modifying speech, as well as amplifying his vocabulary, as his wants should increase, and his information be enlarged. The happiness of the primitive pair was to want but little: it was in a state of society and of corruption, that man found out many inventions, and became subject to various wants; and, in increasing his knowledge, he increased his sorrow. We may be disposed to think, that the first characters stood for ideas, rather than articulate sounds, whereby they were expressed to the ear; but, it is exceedingly difficult to come to any decisive conclusion on so intricate a subject, as we are hardly capable of forming a judgment respecting the state of primitive society, and especially that of the first man. The reasoning of the learned Professor, is not merely plausible, but carries with it great weight.

## No. VI.

*Ossian.*

As the poems of this ancient Bard have been much admired for their beauty, so have they been regarded as of great importance to the historian and the antiquary. Hence, both Dr. Henry and Whitaker have made considerable use of Ossian, in reference to the manners of that rude age, and state of society, in which he and his heroes lived. The primitive way of writing, although not in metre, yet may be said to be in poetry. The few that wrote were either men of great elevation of mind, or authorized to record public transactions; and in the Welsh Triads, the first historians were the Fathers of the Muse. Homer, who was not only the greatest genius, but the most excellent of ancient Bards, has transmitted to us, with the hand of a master, a faithful delineation of the manners of the ancient Greeks. Ossian has been compared to Homer: but, although he lived in a posterior age, he was not a member of civilized society; and he appears unacquainted with the fictions, which, in polished nations, have been considered essential to poetry. It is the age of refinement, which is the age of fictitious narrative. But in the Bard of Selma, we may expect to see nature, truth, and simplicity.

As to the genuineness of the productions, presented to the world by Mr. M'Pherson, as translations from the Gaelic of Ossian; the antiquary, the philosopher, and the critic, may perceive in them some genuine traits of ancient composition and sentiment, although much embellished in the translation. But that these compositions, in their present connected form, could ever proceed from



Bard in the age of Ossian, will appear extremely doubtful, if we compare them with specimens of the efforts of other ancient poets, in more favoured circumstances than Ossian, of whom we may instance *Llowarch*, the Cumbrian Bard, and *Aneurin*, the Otadinian Chief.

It seems difficult for us to comprehend, how there should be any thing like an epic poem produced by a poet in the age and circumstances of Ossian: but that compositions of so early an age might descend to us, preserved by oral tradition, recited from age to age, is not incredible; yet we expect to find in such kind of songs, although beautiful in their kind, a rudeness and obscurity suited to a certain state of society. In comparing, therefore, the poems of Ossian, translated by M'Pherson, with other ancient fragments, I will not undertake to decide any thing; but that we have a right to expect some resemblance, Dr. Blair himself has taught us. I shall transcribe the doctor's own words, in his fine and masterly dissertation on the poems of Ossian.

"Music or song has been found coeval with society among the most barbarous nations. The only subjects which could prompt men, in their first rude state, to utter their thoughts, in compositions of any length, were such as naturally assumed the tone of poetry; praises of their gods, or of their ancestors; commemorations of their own warlike exploits; or, lamentations over their misfortunes. And, before writing was invented, no other compositions, except songs or poems, could take such hold of the imagination and memory, as to be preserved by oral tradition, and handed down from one race to another.

"Hence, we may expect to find poems among the antiquities of all nations. It is probable, too, that an extensive search would discover a certain degree of resemblance among all the most ancient poetical productions, from whatever country they have proceeded. In a similar

state of manners, similar objects and passions, operating on the imaginations of men, will stamp their productions with the same general character. Some diversity will no doubt be occasioned by climate and genius. But mankind never bear such resembling features, as they do in the beginnings of society. Its subsequent revolutions give rise to the principal distinctions among nations; and divert into channels, widely separated, that current of human genius and manners, which descends originally from one spring. What we have been long accustomed to call the oriental vein of poetry, because some of the earliest poetical productions have come to us from the East, is probably no more oriental than occidental: it is characteristic of an age rather than a country; and belongs, in some measure, to all nations at a certain period. Of this the works of Ossian seem to furnish a remarkable proof."

The Doctor gives that curious specimen of Scandinavian poetry from *Olaus Wormius*, the epicidium, or funeral song, composed by Regner Lodbrog, king of Denmark, in the eighth century. But where can we find any thing like an epic poem, among any of the ancient remains of either Gothic or Celtic Bards? Here lies the difficulty, in accounting for the *Fingal* and the *Temora* of Ossian.

If we look at the poems of *Llowarch*, as published by Mr. Owen, who has given translations along with the originals; and if we consult Mr. Sharon Turner's vindication of the early Welsh Bards; we shall perceive a similarity, in certain respects, an elevation of mind, and fine strokes of nature, but not that elegance and regularity. There is also this difference: the *GODODIN* of *Aneurin*, and the heroic elegies of *Llowarch*, have been preserved in manuscripts, which can be traced as far down as the twelfth century; whereas, in this respect, there is a mysterious veil thrown over Ossian.

That the compositions are grounded upon ancient songs, handed down by recital from age to age, may be credited; and being sufficiently satisfied of this, they may be referred to, in many instances, by way of elucidating ancient manners. It has been considered a great singularity in these poems, that they contain no immediate reference to a divinity; while, at the same time, they abound with the finest moral sentiments. This omission is thought to furnish a grand objection to the authenticity of these poems. But Ossian will be found to contain allusions of a religious nature, although not frequent. We have no sacred names in the mouths of his heroes, it is true; nor have we any mention of sacrifice, or rites of worship: but as the Caledonians differed from our southern Britons, and their rites were more rude and simple, and they had not among them, most probably, any regular priesthood, we have no right to expect those direct allusions to religion, the want of which are considered a defect in Ossian. The Caledonians approached nearer to the ancient Germans, than the Gauls and Britons, in their system of superstition; but, both the one and the other were full of allusions to a state of futurity, and of veneration for departed spirits. But in Ossian's heroes, there was a certain sternness of character, and such high notions of valour, that they were totally averse to the thought of any interposition of superior powers. Homer has much of this kind of machinery: but Ossian lived in a very different state of things, and his muse was not aided by fiction. But, besides all this, we are not to suppose that any genuine remains of Ossian would contain any allusions of this nature, not attended with an obscurity easily misapprehended by his countrymen, in recent times, in translating him.

But we have some striking references of a religious nature, where mention is made of the "Circle of Loda,"

which is termed "the stone of their fear," and "the mossy stone of power." In the sixth book of Fingal, we have a remarkable passage: "*Grumal* was a chief of *Cona*.—He poured his warriors on *Craca*: *Craca's* king met him from his grove; for there, within the circle of *Brumo*, he spoke to the stone of power;" he addressed the divinity supposed to reside there.—"Three days they strove together; and *Grumal*, on the fourth, was bound. Far from his friends they placed him, in the horrid circle of *Brumo*; where often, they said, the ghosts of the dead howled round the stone of their fear."

But the heroes of Ossian seem to have bid defiance to all the powers of superstition, and paid as little regard to what the common minds brought horror and dismay, as *Julius Cæsar* did to the sacred groves at Marseilles, or *Suetonius* to the sacred fanes of the Druids of Mona. The passage we refer to is in *Carric-thura*, and is very interesting; the scene lies in the Orkneys:—"Night came down on the sea; *Rotha's* bay received the ship. A rock bends along the coast with all its echoing wood. On the top is the circle of *Loda*, the mossy stone of power! A narrow plain spreads beneath, covered with grass and aged trees, which the midnight winds, in their wrath, had torn from the shaggy rock. The blue course of a stream is there; the lonely blast of ocean pursues the thistle's beard. The flame of three oaks arose: the feast is spread around; but the soul of the king is sad, for *Carric-thura's* chief distressed.

"The wan, cold moon, rose in the east. Sleep descended on the youths. Their blue helmets glitter to the beam; the fading fire decays. But sleep did not rest on the king: he rose in the midst of his arms; and slowly ascended the hill, to behold the flame of *Sarno's* tower.

"The flame was dim and distant; the moon hid her red face in the east. A blast came from the mountain;

on its wings was the spirit of Loda. He came to his place in his terrors, and shook his dusky spear. His eyes appear like flames in his dark face; his voice is like distant thunder. Fingal advanced his spear in night, and raised his voice on high.

“Son of night, retire: call thy winds, and fly! Why dost thou come to my presence, with thy shadowy arms? Do I fear thy gloomy form, spirit of dismal Loda? Weak is thy shield of clouds: feeble is that meteor, thy sword! The blast rolls them together; and thou thyself art lost. Fly from my presence, son of night! call thy wings, and fly!

“Dost thou force me from my place, replied the hollow voice? The people bend before me. I turn the battle in the field of the brave. I look on the nations, and they vanish; my nostrils pour the blast of death. I come abroad on the winds: the tempests are before my face. But my dwelling is calm, above the clouds; the fields of my rest are pleasant.

“Dwell in thy pleasant fields, said the king: let Comhal’s son be forgot. Do my steps ascend from my hills, into thy peaceful plains? Do I meet thee with a spear, on thy clouds, spirit of dismal Loda? Why then dost thou frown on me? Why shake thine airy spear? Thou frownest in vain: I never fled from the mighty in war. And shall the sons of the wind frighten the king of Morven? No: he knows the weakness of their arms!

“Fly to thy land, replied the form; receive the wind, and fly! The blasts are in the hollow of my hand: the course of the storm is mine. The king of Sora is my son; he bends at the stone of my power. His battle is around Carric-thura; and he will prevail! Fly to thy land, son of Comhal; or feel my flaming wrath!

“He lifted high his shadowy spear! He bent forward his dreadful height. Fingal, advancing, drew his sword,

the blade of dark-brown Luno. The gleaming path of the steel winds through the gloomy ghost. The form fell shapeless into air, like a column of smoke, which the staff of the boy disturbs, as it rises from the half-extinguished furnace.

“The spirit of Loda shrieked, as, rolled into himself, he rose on the wind. Inistore shook at the sound. The waves heard it on the deep. They stopped, in their course, with fear: the friends of Fingal started at once, and took their heavy spears. They missed the king; they rose in rage; all their arms resound. The Moon came forth in the east; Fingal returned in the gleam of his arms.”

Many passages in Ossian present us with the views of a future state, entertained by the Caledonian heroes. They displayed that contempt of death which was common both to the Celts and to the Goths. The existence of man, after death, they believed; but their notions were very rude; for, instead of representing the departed as living in a separate state, they believed that they still hovered round their former scene of being. The sentiments of the Caledonians, respecting the decease of their friends, is instanced in the following dirge, on the death of Comala, the lady of Fingal's love:—“See meteors gleam around the maid! See! moonbeams lift her soul! Around her, from the clouds, bend the awful faces of her fathers; Sarno of the gloomy brow; the red-rolling eyes of *Fidallan*! When shall thy white hand arise? When shall thy voice be heard on our rocks? The maids shall seek thee on the heath, but they shall not find thee. Thou shalt come at times to their dreams, to settle peace in their soul. Thy voice shall remain in their ears; they shall think with joy on the dreams of their rest.”

The warrior consoled himself, that if he fell in the field, his grave should be raised high. “Grey stones

and heaped up earth should mark him to future years; and his fame should survive, while the hunter, in passing by, exclaims, "*Some warrior rests here.*"

They believed that "the ghosts of the departed were seen on the hills, when the musing hunter alone stalked slowly over the heath."

The Bard, in speaking of himself, says, "Future times shall hear of me! The sons of the feeble will hereafter lift the voice on Cona; and, looking up to the rocks, say, 'Here Ossian dwelt.' They shall admire the chiefs of old, the chiefs that are no more! While we ride on our clouds, on the wings of the roaring winds, our voices shall be heard at times in the desert; we shall sing on the breeze of the rock." (*The war of Caros*).

Most of Ossian's mythology turns on the appearances of departed spirits. These, consonantly to the knowledge of rude ages, are represented not as purely immaterial, but as thin airy forms, which can be visible or invisible at pleasure: their voice is feeble, their arm is weak, but they are endued with knowledge more than human. In a separate state, they retain the same dispositions which actuated them in life. They ride on the wind, they bend their airy bows, and pursue deer formed of clouds. The ghosts of departed Bards continue to sing. The ghosts of departed heroes frequent the field of their former fame. "They rest together in their caves, and talk of mortal men. Their songs are of other worlds. They come sometimes to the ear of rest, and raise their feeble voice." All this, says Dr. Blair, presents to us much the same set of ideas, concerning spirits, as we find in the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*, where Ulysses visits the regions of the dead. And in the twenty-third book of the *Iliad*, the ghost of Patroclus, after appearing to Achilles, vanishes precisely like one of Ossian's; emitting a shrill, feeble cry, and melting away like smoke.

From what may be collected from Ossian, as well as Mr. M'Pherson's Introduction to the History of Great Britain, it appears, that the mythology of the Caledonians approached very near to that of the nations of the Baltic, whether that arose from their being partly of Scandinavian origin, or from their communication with them through the medium of the Orkneys.

Mr. M'Pherson, in one of his notes on a passage in *Temorah*, which speaks of "the stone of *Loda* falling from rocky *Druman-ard*, when spirits shake the earth in their wrath," gives the following illustration:—"By the stone of *Loda* is meant a place of worship, among the Scandinavians. The Caledonians, in their many expeditions into Orkney and Scandinavia, became acquainted with some of the rites of religion which prevailed in those countries; and the ancient poetry frequently alludes to them. There are some ruins, and circular pales of stones, remaining still in Orkney, and the islands of Shetland, which retain to this day the name of *Loda*, or *Loden*." They seem to have differed materially, in their construction, from those Druidical monuments which remain in Britain, and the Western isles.

"The places of worship among the Scandinavians were originally rude, and unadorned. In subsequent ages, when they had opened a communication with other nations, they adopted their manners, and built temples. That at Upsal, in Sweden, was very rich and magnificent. Harquin, of Norway, built one near Drontheim, little inferior to the former; and it went always under the name of *Loden*." Thus Mr. M'Pherson, who, in another place, observes that the religious rites of the Fir-Bolg of Ireland (descended from the Belgæ of Britain and Gaul) were different from those of the other inhabitants of Ireland, whom he calls the *Gael*, and of course supposes them to be of the same stock as the Caledonians.



The same reasoning, applied to the case of the latter people, and the Britons, seems to indicate, that their religious mythology and rites differed from those of the south; and that, as I conceive, arising from their being of the same stock as the Scandinavians.

Some of the poems of Ossian are founded upon their combats with the Romans; and particularly with Caracull, or Caracalla, the son of the emperor Severus, stiled, by the Bard, the king of the world. On his being foiled in his attempt to penetrate into Caledonia, the Bards of Fingal sung, in strains of exultation,—“ Roll, streamy Carun, roll in joy, the sons of battle fled!” The Bards of Fingal, in celebrating his deeds of valour, notice his success in combating the Romans:—“ Who comes from the land of strangers, with his thousands around him? The sun-beam pours its bright stream before him; his hair meets the wind of his hills. Who is it but Comhal’s son, the king of mighty deeds! He beholds his hills with joy; he bids a thousand voices rise. Ye have fled over your fields, ye sons of the distant land! The king of the world sits in his hall, and hears of his people’s flight. He lifts his red eyes of pride; he takes his father’s sword. Ye have fled over your fields, sons of the distant land.’

The description of Cuthullen, in his car of battle, is exceedingly fine:—“ It bends behind, like a wave near a rock; like the sun-streaked mist of the heath. Its sides are embossed with stones, and sparkle like the sea round the boat of night. Of polished yew is the beam; its seat of the smoothest bone. The sides are replenished with spears; the bottom is the footstool of heroes.” Then the horses are described in all the pomp of language; the one is high-maned, broad-breasted, proud, wide-leaping steed of the hill. The other is thin-maned, high-headed, strong-hoofed, fleet, bounding son of the hill: the name

of the one is Sulin-Sifadda, the other is Dusronnal. "A thousand thongs bind the car on high. Hard polished bits shine in a wreath of foam. Thin thongs, bright-studded with gems, bend on the stately necks of the steeds. The steeds that, like wreaths of mist, fly over the streamy vales! The wildness of deer is in their course, the strength of eagles descending on the prey. Their noise is like the blast of winter, on the sides of the snow-headed Gormal."

In Ossian there are two places where we have the Bard's address to the sun, but without any expressions of adoration, if indeed here also we have Ossian himself: but we should be half disposed to think, that it is Milton's address, and not Ossian's. I wish the translator had given the public full proof where he procured his originals, that we might not be tempted to say, in this and other instances, "The garments are those of Esau, but the voice is the voice of Jacob."

Carric-thura opens with a song of triumph, the beginning of which contains an address to the sun:—"Hast thou left thy blue course in heaven, golden-haired son of the sky! The west has opened its gates; the bed of thy repose is there. The waves come to behold thy beauty. They lift their trembling heads. They see thee lovely in thy sleep; they shrink away with fear. Rest in thy shadowy cave, O Sun! let thy return be in joy. But let a thousand lights arise to the sound of the harps of Selma.—Raise the song, O Bards; the king is returned with his fame!"

In the conclusion of Carthon, he mourns the death of the hero of that poem:—"My soul has been mournful for Carthon; he fell in the days of his youth. I think I hear a feeble voice! the beam of heaven delights to shine on the grave of Carthon: I feel it warm around!" Then the bard breaks forth in a strain which cannot fail to

remind us of the apostate angel's address to the great Regent of the day :—" O thou that rollest above, round as the shield of my fathers ! whence are thy beams, O Sun ! thy everlasting light ? Thou comest forth in thy awful beauty ; the stars hide themselves in the sky : the moon, cold and pale, sinks in the western wave. But thou thyself movest alone :—who can be a companion of thy course ? The oaks of the mountains fall ; the mountains themselves decay with years ; the ocean shrinks and grows again ; the moon herself is lost in heaven : but thou art for ever the same, rejoicing in the brightness of thy course. When the world is dark with tempests ; when thunder rolls, and lightning flies ; thou lookest in thy beauty from the clouds, and laughest at the storm. But to Ossian thou lookest in vain ; for he beholds thy beams no more, whether thy yellow hair flows on the eastern clouds, or thou tremblest at the gates of the west. But thou art perhaps like me, for a season : thy years will have an end. Thou shalt sleep in the clouds, careless of the voice of the morning. Exult then, O Sun, in the strength of thy youth : age is dark and unlovely ; it is like the glimmering light of the moon, when it shines through broken clouds, and the mist is on the hills ! the blast of the north is on the plain, and the traveller shrinks in the midst of his journey."

Here, if we have Ossian himself, there is nothing of adoration, no religious veneration for the solar luminary. It is evident that the Britons of the south were addicted to that kind of idolatry : so, according to Tacitus, were the ancient Germans ; and we are assured that the ancient Irish adored the sun. Had the Caledonians then no objects of worship ?

As a singular contrast, we refer to that ancient ode to the Sun, with which Sir William Jones was much struck ; " which," says that great man, " I should, untaught, have judged of Hindû origin, the opening especially :—"

piciate my lays, O sun! thou mighty lord of the seven Heavens; who swayest the universe through the immensity of space and matter.' And the close: 'Thou art the only glorious and sovereign object of universal love, praise, and adoration.' This is precisely the language of a *Saura*, be he of Hindustan or Hibernia."

No passages in the Bard of Selma can be more affecting than those where he describes his father Fingal delivering his spear to his son Ossian; excepting where the Bard anticipates his own decease. Fingal, on delivering his spear to his son, when *he heard the call of years*, consoles himself with the thought, that he had not dishonoured his ancestors, but that his deeds were *pleasant to their eyes*. "Wherever I came forth to battle, on my field are their columns of mist. But mine arm rescued the feeble; the haughty found my age was fire. Never over the fallen did mine eye rejoice. For this my fathers shall meet me, at the gates of their airy halls, tall with robes of light, with mildly kindled eyes. But to the proud in arms, they are darkened moons in heaven, which send the fire of night red-wandering over their face." *Temora*, B. viii.

A collection of poems, ascribed to Ossian, appeared in Ireland. The editor confesses that he found no complete pieces, but only fragments of old traditionary songs, very sublime, and remarkable for their simplicity and elegance. From those fragments an Irish gentleman composed a set of poems, which he presented to the world. Many of these varied materially from M'Pherson's Ossianic productions, even with regard to the same pieces; but in particular there was this variation, that they contain many allusions to a Divine Being. "In Mr. M'Pherson's," says the editor, "there is no mention of the Divinity. In these, the chief characteristic is, the many solemn descriptions of the Almighty Being, which give a degree of ele-

vation to them, unattainable by any other method." That is undoubtedly just ; but still, this does not prove that the Irish Ossian is the genuine one, in opposition to M'Pherson's edition : the inference appears to be the reverse ; that the latter, although destitute of the divine sentiments contained in the Irish edition, is the more likely to be genuine. When the Hibernian gentleman found that Ossian was disparaged for want of speaking a language, which, in fact, no rude heathen ever spoke, it was very convenient to infuse into the old Bard those sentiments, whereby he would " gain in sublimity, by his magnificent display of the power, bounty, eternity, and justice of God." By making Ossian thus a sound divine, far superior to Tully and Plato, we are reminded of the person, who published an account of the last sayings of Mr. Baxter, being speedily succeeded by him who cried in the streets, " More last words of Mr. Baxter."

## No. VII.

## HANES TALIESIN.

*The History of Taliesin.*

IN the days of old, there was a person of noble lineage, in *Pecallyn*, the end of the lake ; his name was *Tegid Voel*, or the smooth-faced comely one, and his paternal estate was in the midst of the lake of Tegid (near Bala). His espoused wife was called *Ceridwen* ; and of that wife he had a son called *Mororan*, raven of the sea, and a daughter called *Creirwyw*, the sacred token of life ; and she was the fairest of all the damsels in the world : but they had a brother, who was the most hideous being in the whole world ; he was named *Avagddu*, or the thick darkness. Then Ceridwen, his mother, bethought herself, that it was unlikely he should be held in esteem among people of rank, on account of his deformity, unless he were endowed with certain distinguishing qualities and attainments ; for this happened in the early part of the age of Arthur, and the round table.

Then Ceridwen determined, agreeably to the secret arts of the books of the *Pheryllt*, to prepare a cauldron of poetic endowment, and the various sciences (*Awen a gwybodau*) for her son ; that he might be honoured and esteemed, on account of his knowledge and his skill, with respect to the knowledge of future events. Then she began to set the cauldron a boiling ; and after it once commenced boiling, it must continue so to the end of a year and a day, and until three drops of the endowment of the spirit could be obtained.

She had stationed *Gwion* the Little, the son of *Gwreang*, (the herald) of *Llanvair*, in *Caer Einiawn* (the city of the just) in *Powys*, to superintend the preparation of the cauldron : and a blind man, called *Morda*, was to set fire

under the cauldron, with an injunction to keep it boiling, without intermission, for the space of one year and a day. *Ceridwen*, in the mean while, studied books of astronomy, and attended to the planetary hours, and employed herself daily in gathering every sort of herbs which possessed any virtues.

Towards the close of the specified term, as she was thus engaged, it happened, that three drops of the efficacious water from the cauldron flew out, and alighted upon the finger of *Gwion* the Little. The heat of the water occasioned his putting his finger in his mouth; and as soon as those miraculous drops touched his lips, every event of futurity was laid open to him; and he clearly perceived, that his greatest concern should be, to elude the stratagems of *Ceridwen*, whose knowledge was so great. His extreme dread of her made him escape towards his own country.

And now the cauldron burst into two halves; for the whole of the water which it contained, excepting three efficacious drops, was poisonous; so that it poisoned the horses of *Gwyddno Garanhir*, which drank out of the channel into which the cauldron had emptied itself: hence that channel was afterwards called "The poison of Gwyddno's horses."

*Ceridwen* entering at that instant, and perceiving that her whole year's labour was utterly lost, seized a stake, and struck the blind *Morda* on his head, until one of his eyes dropped on his cheek. Thou hast done wrong in thus disfiguring me, exclaimed *Morda*, seeing I am innocent: thy loss has not been occasioned by any fault of mine. True, replied *Ceridwen*; it was *Gwion* the Little that robbed me. Having said thus much, she immediately went in pursuit of him. *Gwion* perceiving her, transformed himself into a hare, and ran off. But *Ceridwen* became a greyhound bitch, and turned him, and chased him to the side of a river. Leaping into the stream, he

assumed the form of a fish ; but she now became an *otter-bitch*, and traced him through the stream, so that he was obliged to take the form of a *bird*, and mount into the air. There he could not escape her fury ; for, transforming herself into a *hawk*, she had him in her power : but he, terrified at his approaching fate, perceived a heap of wheat, newly winnowed, lying on the floor, and he dropped into the midst of it, and assumed the form of a single grain. *Ceridwen* now took the form of a black high-crowned *hen* : she alighted upon the heap, scratched him out, distinguished, and swallowed him ; and, as the tale is told, she was pregnant of him nine months ; and, when delivered of him, he was so lovely a babe, she could not find in her heart to put him to death. She placed him, however, in a coracle ; and threw him, in it, into the sea, to take his chance, on the twenty-ninth of April.

In those times, *Gwyddno* had a wear on the beech, between Dyvi and Aberystwith, near his own castle : and in that wear it was customary to take fish to the value of a hundred pounds, every year, upon the eve of the first of May.

*Gwyddno* had an only son, named *Elphin*, who had been a very extravagant youth, and was now become extremely necessitous : this was a great affliction to his father, who thought he must have been born in an evil hour. His father, however, was advised to let him have the drawing of the wear for that year, to try whether any good luck would ever befall him, so that he might have something to begin the world with.

*Elphin*, on the morrow (being *May eve*), inspected the wear, and could find nothing : but, as he was going away, he perceived a coracle, resting on the pole of the dam. Then, said one of the wearmen to him, this night thou art become truly unfortunate, for thou hast ruined the repute of this wear, in which there has always been taken the value of a hundred pounds, upon the eve of the



first of May. What now, said Elphin, suppose the value of a hundred pounds be still found there in the coracle. The skin was opened ; and he who opened it, perceiving the forehead of an infant, said to Elphin,—*Behold, TALIESIN ! radiant front.* *Taliesin* then be his name, replied Elphin ; and he took the child in his arms, and commiserating his misfortune, with downcast look, he placed him behind him upon his horse, and away he paced, while the babe sat as in an easy chair.

Now, very shortly after this, the young child composed a song of consolation and praise to Elphin ; and he predicted his future greatness. That was the first production of *Taliesin*, which he sung in order to console Elphin, for his disappointment in the draught of the wear ; and still more so, at the thought that the world would consider that misfortune altogether owing to himself.

Elphin carries the babe to the castle ; and *Taliesin* is asked whether he be a human being, or a spirit. The reply is given in verse, in which he tells the king, in mystical strains, that he is a primary Bard, and professes his having existed under the form of a variety of personages, in all ages of the world : by which is designed to shew the great antiquity of Bardism. That poem is preserved, and begins with the words *Prifardd cyffredin*, &c. *Taliesin* is then taken by Elphin to his father Gwyddno's, who, according to the same fabulous narrative, demands another song ; and he is answered by the Bard in a poem, in which he begins by praising the qualities of water, &c. and professes to have been *thrice born*. He boasts his acquaintance with all the arts ; and professes to know all that is past, and all that is to come.

He then gives a mystical description of the various changes, or rather the various stages of penance through which he had passed, during which he had assumed the figure of various animals, such as a buck, a wolf, a thrush, a fox, a pole-cat ; yea, that he had assumed the appear-

ance of heated iron, and of a spear head, and then appeared as a boar, as a bull, and at last like a grain of wheat, when he was swallowed up by Ceridwen, who dropped him, in a leather bag, into the sea of Dylan, from which situation he was rescued by his patron *Elphin*.

From this ancient piece of mythology some light is thrown on the rites and practices of the semi-Christian and semi-Pagan Bards of the sixth and seventh century. I have already offered some remarks, for which I am principally indebted to the Rev. Edward Davies. The doctrine of transmigration, the rites of Bardic initiation, and the vast importance of Bardic science, are the leading topics. The magic cauldron pertained to the northern, as well as the western mythology; and there are many things worthy the attention of antiquaries, in all the fragments that bear the name of *Taliesin*, a name which is applicable to more than one person. The author of these papers could not justify himself in spending so much time, or paying that attention to those fragments, which may be requisite to unriddle the design, and make out the sense of those pieces. The pains taken by the editors of the *Myvyrian Archæology*, to collect and publish the remains of our ancient poetry, entitle those gentlemen to the respect of every antiquary; and perhaps, at a future period, some gentleman will be able, (if possessed of insuperable patience) to offer some ingenious conjectures, and to add to our stock of antiquarian information.

END OF VOL. I.









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